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UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

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CENTRE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN
AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

A VIEW FROM THE RIMLAND:
an appraisal of
Soviet interests and involvement
in the Gulf

by

Melvyn Pryer



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M. Pryer
Durham, September, 1979.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

ACDA	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (USA)
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (comecon)
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
EEC	European Economic Community
Gulf	Arabian/Persian Gulf
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NFAC	National Foreign Assessment Centre (USA)
OAPEC	Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PDRY	People's Democratic Republic of the Yemen
PFLO	Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman
PFLOAG	Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SEATO	South East Asian Treaty Organisation
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
US, USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
YAR	Yemen Arab Republic

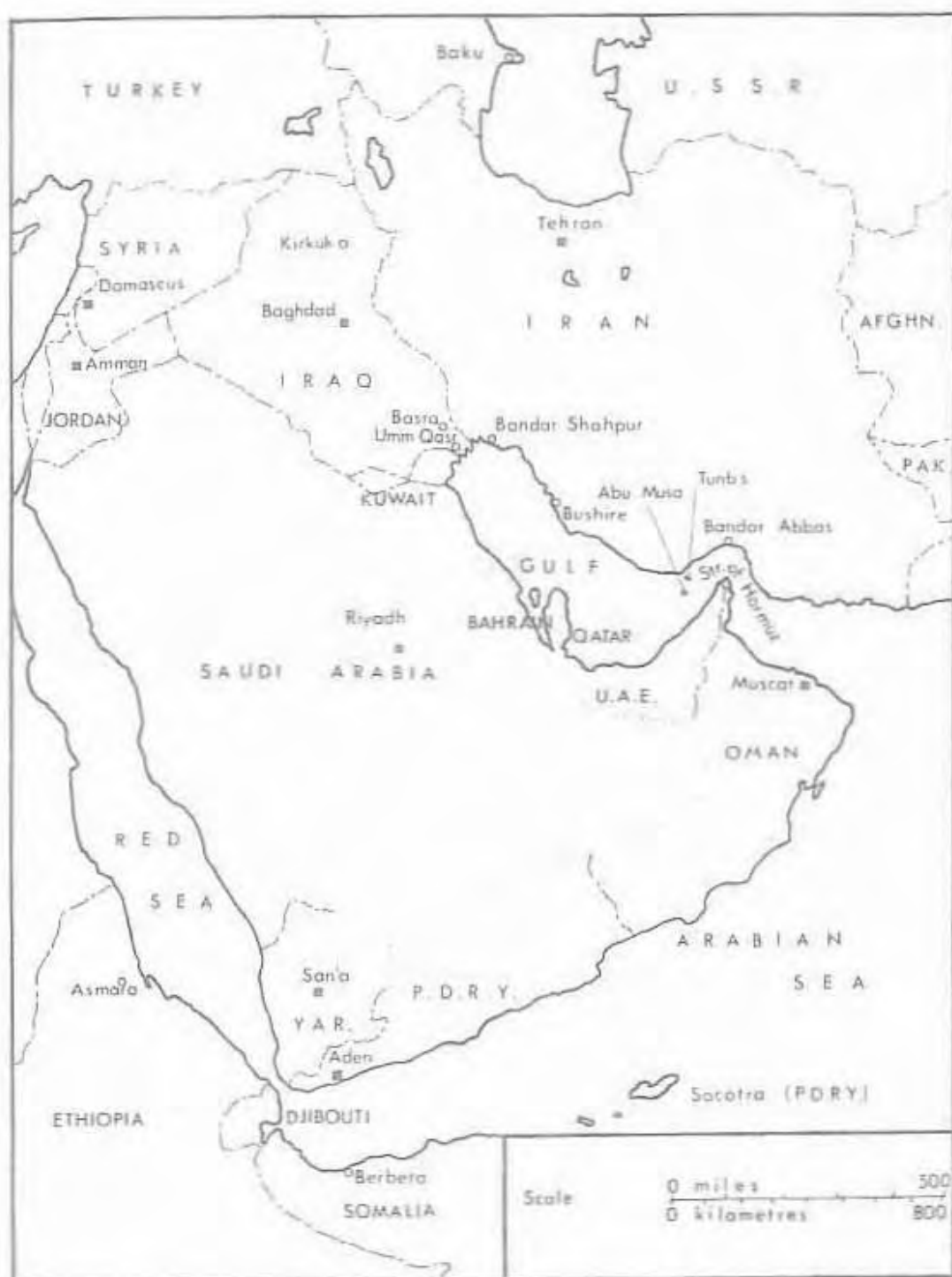
INTRODUCTION

Recent Soviet activities in the "Rimland" of the Gulf - in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the PDRY - and the collapse of the monarchy in Iran on 1 February 1979, have given new substance to Soviet influence and ambitions in the Gulf. These destabilizing events have been submitted as evidence not only of Brezhnev's and Kosygin's wish to achieve the oft-quoted traditional Russian goals of gaining "warm water ports", but also of the desire to exercise control over the Gulf's oil reserves, with the aim of being able to deprive the West.

Under such circumstances, the "geopolitical domino effect", a term associated with the United States' crisis thinking of the 1950s, has been rekindled and has led to the widespread use of phrases such as the "Arc of Crisis"¹ and the "Crumbling Triangle"² to describe the Gulf and its immediate area. Yet it has been claimed that the reluctance of the United States to contemplate the use of force to plug leaks in the Rimland dyke, in the aftermath of defeat in Vietnam, merely encourages the USSR and its allies to greater intransigence and aggression. The perceived lack of a firm Western (particularly American) response to the situation predictably has provoked widespread condemnation in the West. This was reflected in a recent report by the Institute for the Study of Conflict, which advocated that the West re-examine its policy with respect to the security of its oil supplies.³

This study is intended as a review of Soviet involvement and aspirations in the Gulf, the aim being not only to ascertain the nature of Soviet political, economic and military initiatives in the region, but also to question the validity of Western concern over the perceived Soviet threat to the Gulf. The text has been divided into four sections. Chapter one - Soviet Policy in the Gulf - draws attention to general Soviet interests, objectives and policy in the region. Chapters two and three are more specific, focusing respectively on the economic and strategic importance of Gulf oil to the USSR, and Soviet military activities in the area. The final Chapter, tentatively headed "The Arc of Opportunity", is an analysis of the effect of recent events in the Gulf and its Rimland on the extent and intent of Soviet activity in the Gulf.

Soviet foreign policy since World War II has until recently been largely Western-orientated, or more properly United States - and NATO - orientated. However, in the 1970s, attempts have been made to redirect Soviet policy. Briefly, this emerging new foreign policy seems to be moving from a predominantly



THE VIEW FROM THE RIMLAND 1979

western to an eastern and southern orientation. The likely motivations for this new line stem from Soviet concern over future relations with China since the USA-China rapprochement, as well as perceived opportunities in the region south of the Soviet Union. Kolkowicz has referred to this new Soviet political orientation as a 'hold and explore' policy.⁴ Soviet leaders are vitally interested in stabilising their relations with the West, through for example SALT agreements and detente, in order to gain a greater freedom of action in future dealings with China, and a greater political flexibility for the exploitation of opportunities in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean.

This movement reflects Brezhnev's abandonment of the optimistic premises of Khrushchev's policies in favour of realism based on a more rational, orderly and prudent assessment of the costs and gains involved in economic, military and political initiatives in the Third World. Khrushchev's foreign policy sought to disguise Soviet military and strategic inferiority with a militant pose and verbal overkill, and was characterised by undifferentiated globalism, Soviet expansion being largely one of momentum - a case of a superpower looking for a purpose. It is therefore not surprising that, when Soviet threats to some important Western interests were challenged, he chose not to resist but to yield and revert to traditional patterns of Soviet policy.

Brezhnev's leadership in the Kremlin has finally succeeded where previous Soviet leaders failed; their strategic power is equal to that of the West, Soviet conventional forces are comparable to those of the West and Soviet strategic doctrines are globally orientated. At the same time the new rational foreign policy, though still largely one of momentum, now concentrates on 'Third World' areas such as the Gulf, which are of more immediate consequence to Soviet policy concern and offer greater potential payoff.⁵

It is in the context of this new foreign policy stance and growing Soviet parity with the West that recent events in the Gulf and its Rimland have caused alarm and uncertainty in the West. Foremost is the realisation that all the events provide increasing evidence of Soviet involvement in the Gulf, which, in the light of the ever more threatening oil crisis, now means that the region has the potential to become the fulcrum of world conflict in the 1980s.

1. SOVIET POLICY IN THE GULF

Historic Interest

While it has been true that Russian leaders since Peter the Great have manifested intermittent ambitions southwards for an outlet to the world's oceans, talk of Russian interest in the Gulf as being therefore traditional is perhaps misleading.⁶ It is far more plausible that this aim related either to the Black Sea coast as argued by Jukes,⁷ or to ports on the Indian Ocean as was suggested in a recent (May 1979) Pentagon report,⁸ rather than to the Gulf. McLaurin⁹ has suggested that it is necessary to distinguish between the land area of Iran (particularly the north) and the Gulf. Iran has long shared a border with Russia and thus it is hardly surprising that Iran has been subject to pressure from its more powerful northern neighbour. As a consequence, while Soviet policy has been orientated in the direction of the Gulf, the Gulf itself has been of virtually no importance to Russia for centuries. Reference is continually made to Russia's so-called search for 'warm water ports' but McLaurin¹⁰ asks with whom these ports would have traded, and in what goods. In addition, Russia's internal lines of communication in areas closest to the Gulf were not highly developed. Even with the spate of Russian railway building towards the close of the nineteenth century, the overriding Russian priorities westwards towards the Turkish Straits and Europe ensured that no real developments were made towards the Gulf, though in any case the Gulf was recognised as a British sphere of influence.

Referring to his Government's decision not to build a road to Persia and occupy a port on the Gulf, the Russian Foreign Minister Count M.N. Muravyov said, in January 1900, that he saw no justification for occupying ports,

"..... whose defence could not be fully ensured. It might be added that the building of strategic positions and coaling stations which are divided by long distances from the operation base, disperses the forces of that country and costs so much that the advantages in many cases are not worth the material sacrifices."¹¹

The rise to power of the Bolsheviks in 1917 led Russian interests to become further divorced from the region, as the new regime's first priority was its own survival which ensured a policy of increasing isolation. Iran was among the countries benefiting from the good neighbour policy which Moscow espoused. The Russian sphere of influence in northern Iran,



established under a convention with the British in 1907, was renounced and a treaty of friendship signed.¹²

It was only with the infamous Ribbentrop-Molotov discussions of 1939 that Soviet attention appeared to focus on the Gulf. Yet, while the USSR stressed aspirations towards the area south of Batumi and Baku in the general direction of the Gulf, it is generally acknowledged that the discussions and the conditions debated were more in the nature of a German ploy to distract Soviet attention away from Europe.¹³

By the end of World War II, both the value of the Gulf and the power of the Soviet Union had changed. Oil was first discovered in commercial quantities in Iran in 1908, and by the 1960s the Gulf was known to hold a major proportion of the world's oil reserves with the West still controlling most of the production. The United States was still a net exporter, but this advantage was to disappear by the end of the 1960s. When the Americans started to import oil, and as the West's dependence on Gulf oil increased, OPEC began to flex its muscles. In the early 1970s the narrowing gap between oil demand and supply created upward pressure on oil prices, and the decision of Saudi Arabia not to increase production as much as the West desired guaranteed a producers' market.

The Soviet Union emerged from World War II as a world power, and one of the few industrialised states not dependent on Gulf oil. The Soviet leadership was not unaware of these developments or their potential impact on the global balance of power if properly exploited. It thus began to redirect its strategy in the Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Coincidental with the rising importance of the Gulf, the United Kingdom's power and influence declined. On 16 January 1968, the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, announced that Britain would maintain its military forces east of Suez only until the end of 1971. Though the Soviets could not accept as genuine Britain's declared evacuation, they nevertheless began to prepare for such an eventuality by strengthening their presence in the area, so that they would be able to fill the vacuum thereby created. There is some disagreement as to the significance of this event in the introduction of Soviet activity into the Gulf. Burrell¹⁴ has argued that it was the British presence which deterred the Soviet Union, and thus the withdrawal created an open environment for Soviet entry. Jukes,¹⁵ in contrast, states that the United Kingdom did not deter the USSR, claiming that Moscow was active in Iraq well before the announcement of withdrawal, and had dealt with North Yemen and Saudi

Arabia as early as the 1920s.¹⁶ He stresses that the two changes which are significant are the oil revolution in the Gulf and the growth and size of the Soviet Navy. Whereas the Soviet Union had used force to influence the Gulf states in the past by redeployment of ground and air forces within its borders, after the mid-1960s naval forces could be used. Indeed, the first Soviet naval units reached the Arabian Sea and visited Iraqi ports in May 1968, just three months after the British declaration.

By the early 1970s, growing international emphasis on the Gulf region, and increasing Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean and its subcontinent, meant that the Gulf became a focus of Soviet attention in the context of the USSR's global strategy. The Soviet Union was by now an experienced and confident international actor and hence, with its increasing political, economic and military resources, it could now pursue its policies in newly important areas such as the Gulf.

Soviet Interests in the Gulf

In the past, Soviet interests in the Gulf had been largely limited to the question of security. However, the recent elevation of the economic and political status of the Gulf in world affairs has inevitably led to a new interest in the region.

Security Interests

Soviet security interests in the Gulf relate to the traditional land-based threat along its southern border with Iran, and the sea-based threat posed by the United States. Down to the 1960s, it was the former which was the immediate security preoccupation, being related to the presence of potentially hostile powers in the Gulf, notably the United Kingdom up to World War II, and thereafter the United States. After 1945, American support of Iran in ending the Soviet wartime occupation of its territory, and destroying the Soviet-engineered republic of Azerbaijan, gave a clear indication of its intention of taking an active role in the region. The United States' involvement in the region became more pronounced in the 1950s, when American initiatives led to the reinstatement of the anti-Soviet Shah in power in August, 1953, following Mossadeq's short-lived rule, and to the creation of a multilateral military defence alliance, the Baghdad Pact, in 1955. This pact, which was the forerunner of CENTO, was interpreted by the Russians as an extension of the NATO and SEATO alliances, designed to encircle and contain the USSR. To the Soviets, it seemed to bring the cold war into the Middle East, while at the same time exposing its south-central areas, or 'soft underbelly',¹⁷ to Western penetration.

This fear was reinforced in March 1959 by the United States' mutual defence agreements with Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, which pledged the USA 'to take appropriate action in Iran's defence in cases of aggression against that country'.¹⁸ There is little doubt that this was prompted by the failure of Iran to obtain from the USSR the suppression of articles five and six of the 1921 Iran-Soviet Treaty.¹⁹

By 1962, development of the intercontinental ballistic missile and Polaris nuclear submarines meant that the significance of military bases near the Soviet border greatly diminished, except for intelligence gathering. This interpretation was borne out when the United States began to disengage from the Northern Tier states of the Gulf, this leading to a decline in the importance of CENTO. Another consequence was the deterioration in relations between Iran and the United States, culminating in Iran's hollow claim of September 1962 that it would not allow the basing of American missiles on its territory. This was clearly an Iranian move to foster better relations with the USSR, which subsequently succeeded. Certainly neither the American ground forces in Iran (up to the recent revolution) nor those in any other Gulf state could pose any direct strategic threat to the USSR.²⁰

The United States sea-based deterrent is a strategic threat, however. The introduction of American nuclear submarines carrying Polaris A and A3 missiles, with their operational range of 3,000 km, meant that weapons could reach the main Soviet industrial centres in the Ukraine and the Kuzbass from deployment positions in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea. With the replacement of Polaris by the Poseidon missiles, whose range is up to 6,000 km, the strategic value of the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea will be increased, and the perception of the threat intensified.²¹

Economic Interests

Before the 1970s, the Soviet Union had no obvious economic interest in the Gulf region, except in the pursuit of other strategic, political or military goals. However, the ever growing need of the USSR for hard currency has now met a unique situation in the Gulf, where economically-underdeveloped states possess an almost unlimited supply of hard currency. This has presented the Soviet Union with an opportunity to earn hard currency by selling industrial and military products. Accordingly, in the 1970s there was a definite growth in the USSR's economic and military aid to, and trade with Iran and Iraq.²²

Soviet economic aid to the region in the period 1974-75 accounted for 48 per cent of Soviet deliveries to less-developed countries, compared with

a figure of only 9.4 per cent in the period 1954-66 (Table 1, Appendix 1). The significance of this aid has been such that the U.S. National Foreign Assessment Centre in 1977 estimated that, in the case of Iran, it had accounted for 90 per cent of that state's coal, iron ore and cast iron output, and 70 per cent of its steel capacity. Nevertheless no major new initiatives in economic aid have been taken since 1973, apart from aid to Iraq in 1976, worth an estimated \$150 million.²³

Similarly, Soviet military aid to the Gulf has risen dramatically, for, while the Gulf received only 20.1 per cent of Soviet deliveries to less-developed countries in the period 1967-70, according to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.), this figure rose to 35.2 per cent in the period 1971-74 (Table 2, Appendix 1).

Similarly, against a background of rising absolute (although not relative) Soviet trade levels with the Middle East, there has been a shift of emphasis towards the Gulf, with the tendency towards the oil countries of Iran and Iraq becoming stronger. In the period 1954-66, Soviet trade with Iran and Iraq stood at only 6.7 per cent of its total trade with less-developed states, yet by the period 1974-75 this figure had risen to 22.4 per cent (Table 3, Appendix 1). Yet the USSR is not a major trade partner of the Gulf, with imports from the area representing only 2.1 per cent of Soviet world imports in 1977, the same proportion as in 1973, while exports to the Gulf accounted for only 2.2 per cent of its total exports in 1977, compared with 1.8 per cent in 1973.²⁴ These figures reflect the perceived inferiority of Soviet capital goods while the expanding economies of the Middle East are demanding the most advanced and efficient technology that money can buy. Nevertheless, Soviet trade with Iran and Iraq is growing rapidly (Table 4, Appendix 1).

The primary economic importance of Soviet trade with the Gulf lies in Soviet energy imports from the area, which have increased in recent years despite the USSR's own exports of oil and gas. The USSR imported 8.86 billion cu m of natural gas in 1973, and although this figure grew to only 9.094 billion cu m in 1974, the 85 per cent price increase agreed upon in 1974 meant that the cost almost doubled.²⁵ In 1976, the Soviet Union signed a five-year trade agreement with Iran worth \$3 billion, which covered exports of gas to the USSR.²⁶ Hence gas imports rose to 9.4 billion cu m in 1977.²⁷ In view of the rising trade in gas between the two states, the pipeline constructed to the USSR in 1967 has taken on a new significance in that, by the 1980s, it could be extended to Western Europe. The USSR would then not only earn a transit fee for Iranian exports

to Europe, but would also obtain a lethal grip on Iranian export earnings.

The USSR has also been importing oil from the Gulf, since 1972 particularly from Iraq which accounts for 90 per cent of its imports. Imports reached a peak in 1973, at 11 million tonnes but, as a result of the oil price rises of 1973/74, have since averaged about 5 million tonnes per annum.²⁸ The USSR has also encouraged the East European members of the CMEA to seek larger shares of their oil from the Middle East, thereby freeing more Soviet oil and gas for exports to the West in return for hard currency.

Political Interests

Soviet-American and Soviet-Chinese relations, as well as Soviet activities in the rest of the Middle East, generate two self-evident Persian/Arabian Gulf political interests, which together enhance potential Soviet economic, geographical and military benefits. The first is the maintenance of Soviet influence as a superpower; the second involves a reduction of the influence of all other powers, particularly that of the United States.

The emergence of the USSR as a world power after 1945 led the Soviet Union to utilise this new status in putting forward claims to a political role in parts of the world that had not been major theatres of war. Soviet claims towards the Middle East were based on two foundations: that the USSR had direct national interests in the area; and that, as a world power, it had legitimate cause to demand influence in every part of the globe. The well-established Soviet Middle Eastern role has since been linked to the Gulf through Iraq.

Hence, a Soviet presence in the Gulf is both a consequence of its status as a superpower and a reflection of the importance of the region in world politics, both as part of the nonaligned world and with regard to oil.

Defensively, the USSR is aware of both the political and security threats posed therefore by American regional dominance. Offensively, ambitions of expansion are synonymous with Soviet doctrinal principles, and Moscow realises that, if the Gulf did become an exclusive sphere of influence, this would have far-reaching repercussions in Europe, Africa and Asia, for it would constitute a radical change in the global balance of power. In addition, the USSR is aware of the Western World's dependence on Gulf oil.

Thus, both defensively and offensively, the USSR has strong interests in denying the United States influence in the Gulf.

Objectives

To ascertain Soviet objectives in the Gulf, the distinction between the doctrinal, ideological considerations of the Soviet Union as the leading communist power, and the military, political and economic interests of the USSR as a state, has to be made. In the former role, the USSR sees itself as head of the world's revolutionary forces, supporting anti-imperialist struggles which at the same time may conflict with national interests. However, since the death of Stalin, the national interests of the USSR as a state have generally taken precedence over ideological impulses and sympathies.²⁹

Related to this distinction is the equally important balance between Soviet strategy and tactics. The first is dogmatic and linked to the aims of communism, the second extremely pragmatic. On this basis, Yodfat and Abir³⁰ made the distinction between strategic long-range goals and tactical, intermediate and short-term aims. They concluded that the long-term aim of establishing a universal communist regime in the area would entail the transformation of the region into a Soviet-controlled southern socialist commonwealth, control of Gulf oil, and the establishment of shorter sea routes between the USSR and the Indian Ocean, via the Suez Canal.

The intermediate aims include a 'Finlandisation' of the area, that is, the regional states would have to subordinate their foreign relations to Soviet interests despite a modicum of domestic independence, the establishment of local revolutionary progressive, anti-Western and pro-Soviet regimes and a limited military presence in or near the area.

Finally, the short-term aims involve the erosion or total removal of Western influence, whether directly or through proxies. In view of their security interests, the major objective of the USSR in the Gulf must be to eliminate the perceived Western threat or, more realistically, to reduce the level of the threat and local support for it. An additional Soviet objective is to increase Soviet influence in the region, which involves the undermining of traditional regimes in the expectation that pro-Soviet progressive ones will emerge, and the expansion of Soviet commercial and cultural ties, for political and military ends. It has further been speculated that the Soviet Union has the objective of building up a military infrastructure in the region, expanding where possible the Soviet military presence, with the region being destined as a springboard for achievements in Africa and Asia.³¹

Soviet Policies and Activities in the Gulf

On the basis of identifying changing Soviet interests and policy constraints, it is possible to distinguish four phases through which Soviet policy in the Gulf has evolved:

- i. The first initiatives (1958-67).
- ii. The gradual shift of the centre of gravity of Soviet interest from the 'African Middle East' to the 'Asian Middle East'. (1967-71).
- iii. A radical Soviet approach to the Gulf. (1971-73).
- iv. Activity in the Rimland. (1973-).

Throughout this entire period, Soviet policy has been tempered by an awareness of the international constraints in relation to the Gulf and its environs resulting from detente, Western interests in the area, and their limited technological-economic ability to compete with the West, such that the limits within which the USSR is willing to operate are determined by the expected counteraction. Yet detente, except in the elementary sense of the avoidance of war, has hardly touched the Gulf. Rather, both superpowers have interpreted detente as a mode of operation by which they may engage in 'peaceful competition' in the region, the result being that the cold war has been slowly dragged into the Gulf and its Rimland.

The first initiatives (1958-67)

Although the local communist parties and related 'frontal organisations' were weak, and their support considered worthless, the Middle East nevertheless represented a classic area for Soviet penetration on account of the region's unstable governments and societies, its inequalities, its virulent anti-Western passions, its current socio-political transformation, and its proximity to the borders of the USSR.³² As a result, Soviet policy towards the Gulf was initially conducted through its exploitation of the Arab-Israeli conflict and support of Arab unity. It was ready to champion anti-Western factions who, whilst acting in their own interests, served Soviet purposes.³³ The paramountcy of the goal of undermining Western influence was consistent, so that even traditionalist regimes such as Saudi Arabia found themselves benefiting from strong Soviet support for their quarrels with the West, as in the period 1955-58 over the Buraimi dispute and in 1961-62 over CENTO.³⁴

Moscow's influence in the Gulf can be said to have begun from the time it recognised Iraq's new regime under Qassem on July 16 1958, following the Iraqi Revolution. Nevertheless, Iraq's significance for the Soviet Union lay in its position in relation to the Mediterranean

coastal states rather than its bordering the Gulf, on account of the ill-founded Soviet belief that the impulses of the Iraqi Revolution would diffuse through this area, particularly in Jordan and the Lebanon.

The forthcoming Western intervention under the 1958 Eisenhower Doctrine served to illustrate not only the limits of Soviet aid to radical leaders and the lack of a Soviet military arm for intervention in remote areas, but also the reluctance of the USSR to foster any communist takeovers. When local communist parties came close to wielding considerable power as in Iran in 1953³⁵ and Iraq in 1959, Moscow exercised caution, lest success in one state should impair relations with others and lead to confrontation with the West. Even with the persecution of local communists in Iraq, following the rise of the Ba'ath party in 1963, Soviet criticism was mild, as outwardly both states tried to create the impression of full cooperation and friendly relations.

On the other hand, the Soviet Union brought its full pressure to bear on CENTO, which had emerged from the ashes of the Baghdad Pact after the Iraqi withdrawal in 1958. Iran's banning of foreign missile bases on its soil led to wide-ranging economic ties between the two states after 1962 as the Soviets tried to increase Iran's dependence on the USSR whilst weakening western influence there, as part of a political offensive against CENTO. From the Soviet viewpoint, detente with Iran meant that the latter could turn its attention south. In view of the West's conviction that, following the British withdrawal, Gulf stability could be safeguarded by local states, it was clearly in Soviet interest not to impede any Iranian initiatives in the Gulf which would keep the West, and particularly the United States, out.

Until 1967, Soviet Gulf interests were clearly limited to the erosion of CENTO, its more important priorities being further west in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the North Yemen Civil War.

The Gradual shift of the centre of gravity of Soviet interest from the 'African Middle East' to the 'Asian Middle East', (1967-71)

The Arab defeat in the Six-Day War greatly harmed the Soviet image and its influence in the Middle East,³⁶ to such an extent that the USSR embarked on a new policy in order to reconsolidate its position among the Arabs, and wherever possible to expand it to states considered peripheral. The Gulf became a particularly attractive area for this exercise in view of British withdrawal. Yet Soviet policy in the Gulf took time to adjust, for no longer could the Soviets exploit their Egyptian surrogates or revolutionary pan-Arabism in the Gulf. This, coupled with the Soviet lack

of knowledge of the area, having diplomatic relations with only three Gulf states - Iran, Iraq and Kuwait - meant that policy was largely determined on an ad hoc basis.

The growing Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf enhanced its relations with Iraq, the Somali Republic and the new radical states of the Sudan, Libya and the PDRY (the first Marxist state in the region). In particular, Iraq's anti-imperialist foreign policy, its cessation of diplomatic relations with key Western states and its anti-Western oil boycott, were highly praised by the Soviet media, as was the law passed in August 1967 effectively nationalising the Iraqi National Oil Company.

However, in July 1968, power in Iraq moved to the right wing of the Ba'ath party under General Hassan al-Bakr, who adopted a more militant stance, and Iraq consequently became increasingly isolated in the Arab world. The new regime thus became heavily dependent on the Soviet Union, which, despite its reservations about the character and policy of the regime, particularly with regard to the persecution of the Kurds and local communists, had little option but to maintain relations, as Iraq was the only 'progressive' state in the Gulf.³⁷

The reversals which Soviet policy suffered in the Sudan in July 1971 and the deterioration of relations with the YAR and Egypt (following Nasser's death) marked the end of the second phase of Soviet policy and gave the Soviet Union's ambitions in the Gulf new impetus.

A Radical Approach to the Gulf? (1971-73)

Even when Soviet influence in the Middle East was at its peak in 1970, the wisdom of purchasing goodwill through military and economic aid to nations in the Third World ideologically opposed to Marxism had begun to be questioned.³⁸ Policy therefore became more selective, with priority being given to states and organisations important to Soviet aspirations and ideologically close to the USSR.³⁹ In the Middle East this involved a shift of Soviet attention to the Gulf through their proxies, the Ba'ath-controlled regimes of Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, from 1970 the Chinese People's Republic's aid to the PFLOAG, whose aim was the overthrow of all the Gulf regimes from Oman to Iraq, began to decline as Chinese policy underwent a transformation (related to the fading of the Cultural Revolution). While the Chinese tried to develop amicable relations with the Gulf states, the USSR simultaneously increased its aid to the PFLOAG,^{40,41} (particularly after the British withdrawal), to the extent that by the end of 1971 the organisation was far more dependent on Soviet than on Chinese aid.

However, because the regional goals of Soviet clients differed from Soviet global aims, policy, far from becoming more radical, became increasingly more cautious. Fears over the British intention to relinquish their hegemony in the Gulf, and an unwillingness to endanger relations with Iran, meant that the USSR was reluctant to support the aggressive policies of its allies.⁴² This was clearly illustrated in Moscow's lack of support for Iraq, in the latter's condemnation of Iran's seizure of the strategic islands, Abu Musa and the Tunbs west of the Strait of Hormuz at the end of November 1971,⁴³ and in its dispute with Iran over the Shatt al-Arab waterway. The Soviet Union further felt unable to join in opposition of the PDRY and Iraq to efforts being made in 1968/69 regarding the formation of a federation of the seven Trucial Coast States and Qatar and Bahrain, despite their fear that this was an Imperialist ploy to maintain Western control in the Gulf.

This apparent contradiction in Soviet policy became further complicated by the increased activity of the United States in the Gulf after 1970. The large volume of American aid to the pro-Western regimes of Iran and Saudi Arabia was clear evidence to the Soviet Union of the West's desire to exclude them from the Gulf. The Russian response was to expand their efforts to gain influence in the Gulf by increasing aid to their allies Iraq and the PDRY. This culminated in a fifteen-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Iraq in April 1972, which provided for further aid and consultation and common action in the event of threats to the security of either party.⁴⁴ While the treaty stressed ideological ties, Moscow's continual fear that Iraq might embark on an impulsive course of action, such as when Iraq invaded Kuwait in March 1973, compelled it to pressurize the Iraqi regime into broadening the base of its government by including communists and Kurds. Iraq's increased dependence on the USSR was probably one of the main reasons for the establishment of a National Front, in July 1973, which included communists, a Soviet-inspired move designed to give the Iraqi regime greater stability and the USSR a measure of control.

At the same time, Soviet activity in the Rimland of the Gulf was increasing. The Indo-Pakistan War of 1971, further attempts to dismember Pakistan, the July 1973 coup against the monarchy in Afghanistan, Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean, and the growing Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, could all be interpreted as evidence of the Soviet Union flexing its muscles in order to embrace the Gulf.

Consequently, Iran accelerated the expansion of its armed forces, no longer opposed Western activity in the Gulf, and revitalised CENTO. The

sincerity behind these gestures was demonstrated at the end of 1972, when an Iranian task force was sent to Oman to fight the Marxist-assisted PFLOAG, and Iran later began building up a military infrastructure on both sides of the Straits of Hormuz, clearly aimed at preventing Soviet intervention and subversion.

Hence, although the Soviets remained only on the Gulf's periphery apart from Iraq, their presence had already begun to alter the traditional balance of power in the Indian Ocean, and events such as the expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt in July 1972 and the rising aggression of OAPEC seemed fully to justify the new Soviet strategy in the Gulf.

Activity in the Rimland (1973 -)

Following the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the oil price rises of 1973/74, the Soviet presence in the vicinity of the region was used to accentuate the tension between the oil-producing states of the Gulf and the Western oil-consumers. The Soviet Union realised that, through its oil policy, OAPEC was rendering a tremendous service to their global strategy. Hence the Soviet Union now considered the conservative regimes of the Gulf a necessary evil, and not only proceeded to improve relations with them, but also encouraged their allies to follow suit. It is significant that, while the USSR still desired to be recognised as the head of the communist world and of the world's 'national liberation movement', in August 1974 the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf changed its name to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO), reflecting an apparent narrowing of aims in line with the Soviet Union's new policy towards The Gulf.⁴⁵ The Soviet interest in the PFLO diminished in direct proportion to their decreasingly subversive role in the Gulf.

While Soviet relations with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia became friendlier during and after the 1973 October War, the ideological rejection of communism by local regimes also ensured that Riyadh cooperated with the United States and Iran in foiling Soviet attempts to establish a foothold in the Gulf. Furthermore, while Soviet prestige in the Middle East was high during the 1973 War, subsequent events served to demonstrate how limited was the Soviet role in the Gulf. The United States' peace initiatives, which froze the USSR out of talks, and the bitter Arab reaction to the perceived lack of Soviet support for the Arabs at the Nixon-Brezhnev summit meeting of 1972, were clearly setbacks for the Soviet Union. The USSR's ambitions in the Gulf were further dashed by the collapse of the Arab oil boycott and by the improving atmosphere of cooperation between most Arab states and the West. The West after all played a dominant part in the economic development

efforts of the Arab oil states, a part which the USSR could not emulate owing to Soviet technological inferiority. Convinced of the crucial importance of Gulf oil in the coming decade and realising that the Soviet presence in the region was part of their global strategy, the United States initiated the Tehran-Riyadh-Cairo axis at the end of 1974, which had a clearly anti-Soviet character. Ironically, the new economic power of the Arab oil-producing states, to which the USSR had contributed, greatly increased the influence of conservative regimes in the Arab world, which the West now utilised to try to diminish the dependence of Soviet-allied states on the USSR.

As a result of Western initiatives and the inability of the USSR to identify itself with anti-Western elements in most of the Middle East's simmering discords, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, Soviet options in the Gulf have remained largely confined to Iraq and Kuwait.

While Soviet relations with Kuwait have improved considerably since Khrushchev's mocking and critical speech on that state in Cairo in May 1964,⁴⁶ claims that Kuwait could become the 'Finland' of the area ignore the obvious Kuwaiti reservations about Soviet intentions, illustrated by their refusal to allow Soviet military advisers into the country. It has been suggested that the Kuwaitis cooperate with the Soviet Union only as an insurance against Iraqi aggression and on account of their desire for neutrality.⁴⁷

At the same time, the Soviet Union's hold in Iraq has begun to slip. While they had supported Iraq in her renewed offensive against the Kurds, probably to protect their oil interests in the Kirkuk region,⁴⁸ Soviet advice on concessions to the Kurds was ignored. Shortly afterwards the Iraqis adopted a policy of rapprochement with the "moderate" states - particularly Saudi Arabia and Iran - culminating in an agreement with Iran over the Shatt al-Arab, on March 6, 1975.

The USSR hoped that the rapprochement with Iran would enable Iraq to conduct a more active policy in the Gulf and that Iraq would form a progressive bloc with Syria which the Soviets could exploit in order to halt the expansion of American influence and its attempts to mediate in the Arab-Israeli dispute. Such an objective, however, proved unrealistic, for the agreement was immediately followed by an intensification of the long established Iraqi-Syrian rivalry. Leading as it did to the collapse of Kurdish resistance, the agreement with Iran freed the Iraqis even further from their isolation in the Arab world and from Soviet patronage and it was not long before senior Iraqi leaders became involved in talks

in Tehran and Riyadh concerning a Gulf defence pact, an anathema to the USSR.⁴⁹ While Iraq maintained its special relations with the Soviet Union (no doubt on account of the constant tension with Syria), her new freedom of action meant she could no longer be coerced into coordinating her policy with the Soviet Union, which she completely ignored in some instances, such as when she established economic relations with the United States in 1975.

The assassination of King Faisal at the end of March 1975 shook the world, but Soviet hopes of a more sympathetic regime in its place were dashed when the new ruler King Khalid accelerated Faisal's policy of eroding Soviet positions in the Middle East. Relations with Iraq were further fostered, the re-Arabisation of the PDRY was promoted, the YAR was coerced out of the Soviet fold, and aid to Oman expanded directly and indirectly through Jordan, in an effort to drive a wedge between the Soviets and their Arab allies. In addition a more extreme line was forced on Saudi Arabia's smaller allies (especially Bahrain), with regard to the suppression of progressive movements, trade unions, and subversive organisations.

With this apparent fading of the animosity between the traditional 'radical' and 'conservative' regimes, the Soviet Union was now without clients to back anti-Western elements, and her influence declined. Conversely, Soviet interest increased in the Rimland of the Gulf, notably in Afghanistan, Somalia (until Autumn 1977) and the PDRY. The fact that the Rimland states are oil-deficient is a major clue to Soviet policy, for oil wealth in the Gulf has led to the growing economic, political and military independence of the region's regimes and increased stability in the area, the oil-rich states being unable to afford the disruption which a war might cause.⁵⁰ Ironically, the only disputes of real significance in the Gulf between 1975 and the end of 1978 were the Iraqi-Syrian conflict, and the simmering Iraqi-Kuwaiti discord, the three participants of which, along with Iran, were the only states in the Gulf vicinity holding diplomatic relations with the USSR. It follows that active involvement in the region's affairs would have necessitated taking sides in these conflicts, which would have reduced Soviet options still further.

Soviet involvement in the Gulf has been further complicated by the antipathy of local regimes to 'communism', which means that a pro-Moscow coup in one state is bound to provoke suspicion and antagonism in others and give rise to counter forces, rather than a 'chain reaction', or 'geopolitical domino effect'.

Hence, the political complexity and confusion of the Gulf discourages the Soviet Union from too great an involvement,⁵¹ and its policy is therefore

cautious, aimed at controlling tension.⁵² Influence has been largely limited to trade relations with Iran, Iraq and Kuwait, despite the obvious political undertones. Although Saudi Arabia remains a focus of Soviet attention on account of its regional and international importance, the shaky Soviet position in the Middle East does not permit a firm thrust to be made towards any political objectives.

However, King Faisal's assassination, and the coups in Oman, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Qatar and Iraq between 1965 and 1975, all confirmed how vulnerable and dependant on personalities the Gulf's regimes are, and the possibility that a single event could lead to a major upheaval. This only reinforced the Soviet Union's premise that it was better to bide her time waiting in the Rimland, relying on modernisation and education to bring down existing regimes, rather than to exert pressure which could provoke an unfavourable reaction.

2. THE SOVIET UNION AND GULF OIL

It is because the Soviet Union perceives Western military and industrial power to be directly related to the accessibility and security of oil supplies and to the influence that can be exerted through control over production, refining and marketing operations, that Soviet interest in the oil of the Gulf and the oil transport routes has to a large degree been motivated by political considerations.⁵³ These inevitably relate to the twin Soviet objectives of a reduction of Western economic and financial influence in the producer states, and an increase in the influence of the Soviet Union.

However, more recently there has been a growing realisation that the Soviet Union may be interested in Gulf oil reserves not only as a potential weapon against the West, but also as an essential source of low-cost energy for her own requirements.⁵⁴ The introduction of this new economic element into Soviet policy in the Gulf has confronted Soviet planners with a new set of problems, contradictions and dilemmas, and has led to speculation that access to Gulf oil has now become a major Soviet priority.

Soviet Political Interest in Gulf Oil

Policy Guidelines

The Soviet Union enjoys effective self-sufficiency in oil, being the largest crude oil producer in the world. Although importing some oil, the USSR is essentially a net exporter (Table 5, Appendix 2). Thus it differs from Western Europe and Japan, for it is not susceptible to a loss or a reduction of essential energy supplies through decisions by the oil-producing states of the Gulf. As early as 1956, when the Suez crisis and Syria's halting of the flow of oil through the Iraq Petroleum Company pipeline where it crossed Syrian territory created an oil shortage in Europe, the Soviet Union became aware of the vulnerability of the West not only to reductions in the supply of Gulf oil but also to the growing energy production-consumption gap, which now threatens to envelope the world in an energy crisis by the mid-1980s.

According to Campbell,⁵⁵ the Kremlin appears to have drawn three conclusions from this situation:

First, the USSR itself has no urgent economic or security need to press for access to oil from the Gulf. It is able to use some, as are its client states in Eastern Europe, but its vital interests are not at stake.

Secondly the Soviet Union is aware of the extreme sensitivity of Western Europe and Japan on the subject of supplies of Gulf oil (Table 6, Appendix 2), and although the Americans are less sensitive, the USSR wishes

to avoid moves which would provoke the United States to intervene on behalf of its allies in the Gulf or elsewhere.

Lastly, the Soviet Union is aware of the importance for the producer states of the oil trade with the West, the advanced capitalist states accounting for 78.6 per cent of Gulf oil exports in 1978,⁵⁶ compared with a probable figure of less than 1 per cent for the Soviet Union. Therefore the USSR knows that attempts to control, disrupt, or shut off that trade for Soviet purposes would risk the alienation of those states and entail a loss of influence in the Gulf area and beyond. This became apparent to the Soviet Union as conflicting interests developed in the Arab world after the 1950s between the oil-producing states, who feared a loss of revenue as a result of the interruption of their oil exports, and the anti-Israel confrontation states, which were non-oil-producers, more extreme, and ready to cooperate with the Soviet Union. It was quite natural that the conservative Gulf producers should fear increasing Soviet attempts to use Egypt to undermine their regimes. Even Iraq, under the radical regime which came to power in 1958, continued to sell oil to its traditional customers.

From these premises the Soviet Union developed policies which were non-provocative and highly opportunistic, supporting any initiatives by the oil-producers which would undermine the commercial interests of the West.

Bilateral Agreements

The pattern of involvement was initially one of bilateral agreements with individual states, most notably Iran and Iraq. The first Soviet entrance into the Gulf oil and gas market was in Iran, in January 1966, when the USSR concluded an agreement for importing Iranian gas in exchange for constructing a steel mill in Esfahan and aiding the construction of a trans-Iranian pipeline to transport the gas.⁵⁷ Yet Soviet-Iranian oil contacts have been minimal. Despite several Soviet offers to prospect for oil in Iran in the late 1960s, Iran continually gave non-committal responses, not desiring Soviet involvement in its oil affairs. Iran was similarly unenthusiastic about a Soviet plan in April 1970 for a large pipeline from Bushire on the Gulf to Astara near the Caspian Sea, which would have piped Arab as well as Iranian oil⁵⁸ to the Soviet Union and thence to Europe. This pipeline would have made the oil-producers in the Gulf and their consumers dependent on the USSR.

Soviet oil imports from Iran are a matter of conjecture. Klinghoffer⁵⁹ claims that the USSR probably has not imported crude oil from Iran (Table 7, Appendix 2), though he cites a number of sources which make reference to such imports. Ironically, the only oil trade between the two states which Klinghoffer could confirm was that the USSR has periodically sold small

quantities of oil products to Iran.

Agreements with Iraq have been more extensive, the Soviet Union gaining its first foothold in the Iraqi oil market following an agreement in December 1967. In the agreement the USSR pledged to extend the necessary aid and equipment to the Iraqi National Oil Company (INOC) to enable them to develop the Iraqi oil industry. The Soviet Union also undertook to conduct a geological survey in northern Iraq to explore the oil resources in the area. Further economic and technical cooperation agreements followed in June 1969, for the Italfaya area project and in July 1969, when the Soviet Union provided loans to Iraq for a number of projects, including the exploration of natural gas and a \$70 million loan to develop the North Rumaila and Ratawi oilfields. Consequently Western oil companies were squeezed out, as the INOC set about developing the North Rumaila field independently with Soviet assistance. At the same time, it was stressed that the INOC would cover the expenses of the assistance by deliveries of oil to the Soviet Union.⁶⁰

This pattern was maintained throughout the early 1970s by a series of 'aid for oil' agreements. Isolated from other Arab states and the West, Iraq needed not only Soviet aid but also the additional markets for its oil which relations with the USSR opened up. Consequently, when production began in the North Rumaila field in April 1972, the USSR received payment for its investments through deliveries of 1 million tonnes of crude oil from the field in 1972, rising to 2 million tonnes a year after 1973, a volume which was originally scheduled to increase to 8 million tonnes by the end of the decade as the field's production approached 40 million tonnes.⁶¹

The USSR has reacted defensively when questioned concerning its motives for importing oil, maintaining that she had no shortage and was importing oil because the Arab states desired to repay Soviet credits in this manner, oil being a form of repayment convenient to both parties. More importantly, the deals also served Soviet political aspirations, fostering closer relations with Iran, and forming part of a growing Soviet involvement in Iraq.

Ultimately oil purchases are designed to enable the USSR to maintain large export commitments for its own machinery and equipment and hence slowly to wean Arab states away from their dependence on European markets by providing new alternative markets.⁶² Moscow believed this would allow the Arab world greater freedom in its oil policy or, perhaps more accurately, freedom to follow Moscow's guidance, and would also enable progressive states to nationalise their oil industries, a step which they were reluctant to take before, as long as oil profits depended on Western markets.

Nationalisation

The international monopoly capitalism of the international oil companies has long been a source of friction between the Soviet Union and the West. The lines of hostility were drawn as early as the 1920s, when Western oil companies tried to put an end to the new Soviet regime and regain their nationalised oilfields and concessions.⁶³ The companies were seen by the Soviet Union as a powerful enemy, manipulating governments behind the scenes and impeding any improvement in relations between the USSR and the West, even after the oil companies' influence on their governments had decreased. The hostilities continued through the mid-1950s when the Soviet Union increased its oil exports to Western states in an effort to undermine the boycott on Soviet products which was a partial outcome of the cold war. The Soviet Union not only sold her oil at bargain prices but was also ready to barter oil for local goods. Soviet oil was traded without regard to economic factors and, ironically, the Arab oil-producing states were the first to suffer from this policy. Thus a common interest arose between the major Western oil companies and the Gulf oil-producing states, both of whom were being undercut in price by the Soviet Union.

The Suez crisis of 1956 brought Egypt to the forefront of Soviet ambitions in the Middle East, Nasser's proposals for widespread nationalisation meeting with Soviet praise. Yet the traditionalism prevalent in the Gulf at this time meant that Soviet analysts appeared to have given little thought, much less support, to the idea that the governments of the region might seek better terms from the oil companies, let alone consider nationalisation. It was not until 1960, the year in which OPEC was created and there were individual movements towards the greater use of service contracts, that concerted action on behalf of the oil-producing states in the Gulf merited attention.⁶⁴ However, it was eleven years before OPEC began to assume a greater importance in coordinating and furthering members' interests, by which time there was a clear movement towards complete ownership and production of oil by host governments.

It was in support of this objective in the Gulf that the Soviet Union extended aid to Iraq, which led to the nationalisation of the Iraq Petroleum Company on June 1 1972. The Soviet Union gained invaluable influence by purchasing great quantities of oil from Iraq, imports rising from 4 million tonnes in 1972 to 11 million tonnes by 1973,⁶⁵ thereby frustrating the boycott on Iraqi oil imposed by Western oil companies.

Yet the Soviet Union had much to gain from the continuing operation of the Western oil companies in the Gulf, as not only was it Soviet practice

to represent the companies as guiding or even initiating Western policies towards the region, but also the companies proved useful in Soviet propaganda attacks on monopolistic exploitation. Thus, the longer the oil companies remained in the Gulf, the longer the Soviet Union had the opportunity to enhance its own prestige and reputation. At the same time the Soviet Union realised that she could not offer the producing states better terms than those they already had with the Western oil companies, being unable to offer higher prices or hard-currency exchanges.

Furthermore, from the ideological viewpoint, even if a Middle Eastern or Gulf "national bourgeois" government nationalises its oil industry, the industry does not, according to strict Marxist interpretations, become the property of the people. This was illustrated in Iran in the early 1950s, when Mossadeq and the National Front, a party sponsored by bourgeois and small industrialists, nationalised the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in a move motivated primarily by the desire to strengthen their own position in the country. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union hinted at its readiness to provide markets and technicians to overcome the resulting Western boycott.

Consequently, the call for nationalisation has generally been silenced by their appreciation of the insuperable obstacles to such a course of action.

The "Oil Weapon"

The Soviet Union has periodically used limited and specific measures of pressure on the West's oil supply, in order to secure political objectives. The best known of these are the Soviet support of the brief oil embargo following the 1967 "Six Day" War and, more importantly, their backing for the Arab use of what is now commonly referred to as the "oil weapon", following the October War in 1973.

Whereas the 1967 oil embargo collapsed on account of the existence of alternative sources of oil, by 1973 no substantial stand-by capacity was available to the West and thus interruptions in Gulf oil flows became critical. The decision by six major Gulf producers, on 16 October 1973, to increase posted prices by 70 per cent and the declaration the following day by OAPEC that monthly oil exports were to be cut by 5 per cent were enthusiastically received by the Soviet information media.⁶⁶ Likewise the total embargo imposed on oil exports to the United States and the Netherlands was praised.

The Soviet Union advised the Arabs to continue using "oil as a weapon" against Israel and her "overseas protectors", in the hope that an exacerbation of American-Arab relations would foster closer Soviet-Arab ties. Smolansky⁶⁷ concluded that Moscow's encouragement of the embargo testified

to Soviet uneasiness over their exclusion from active participation in negotiations designed to seek a separation of Egyptian and Israeli forces along the Suez Canal. The embargo was also a relatively inexpensive way for the USSR to lend support to the more radical Arab states and thus to counter the continuing Chinese jibes about Moscow's ideological heresies.

At the same time the Soviet Union was anxious to stress its lack of direct involvement in the implementation and operation of the "oil weapon", so as not to endanger detente in any way. For this purpose she was conveniently served by Iraq's dissenting voice among the Gulf Arabs who, in ignoring the embargo, effectively served to dissociate the "oil weapon" from radicalism and apparent Soviet influence. This gave credibility to the Soviet portrayal of OPEC as "an anti-imperialist organisation which constitutes the main striking force of developing countries in their struggle for fair oil prices and a revision of terms of payment with the monopolies".⁶⁸

Nevertheless Iraq's nationalisation of American as well as Royal Dutch Shell interests in the Basrah Petroleum Company followed the basic Soviet line.

The Soviet Union emphasised the continuity in OPEC policy and justified it in terms of scarcity, higher costs and oil company profiteering. Similarly they supported the Arab and Iranian production cutbacks and higher prices that occurred in 1974 and 1975, on the grounds that they were necessary in order to conserve oil, rather than exchange it for the depreciating dollar.

The repercussions of the oil crisis were both beneficial and disadvantageous to the Soviet Union.

The OPEC export cuts (which by November 1973 amounted to 25 per cent of the September 1973 level) precipitated major diplomatic shifts favourable to Soviet allies in the Middle East conflict, forcing the West to insist on Israeli concessions in order to facilitate a resolution of the conflict. Moreover the crisis created disarray in the West, with splits developing over Middle Eastern and energy policies.⁶⁹ The Soviet Union gained much propaganda advantage through her warning to the Arab world that the Americans might use force to end the embargo, though they were quick to stress the Arab defence capability, thus removing any grounds for Soviet intervention.

The Arab world was also advised to withdraw its oil revenues deposited in the West and to invest them in joint Soviet-Arab companies to which the Soviet Union would contribute equipment.

Economically, the "oil weapon" benefited the USSR in the short run as the value of Soviet oil exports rose 14 per cent in the years 1973 to 1975,

while their volume increased by only 21.7 per cent (Table 6, Appendix 2). While the price of Soviet oil exports to Eastern Europe rose slowly according to the "Bucharest principle",⁷⁰ those to hard currency areas rose rapidly, the result being that the Soviet trade deficit with such areas was nearly halved by 1974. Consequently the Soviet hand was strengthened in trading with both Eastern Europe and the West.

It is also highly likely that the Soviet Union served as an intermediary for some of the Gulf oil which flowed into Western Europe during the cutbacks, Gardner, for example, claiming that the USSR resold Iranian oil to Western Europe at a 300 per cent profit.⁷¹ Furthermore, despite Arab criticism of her behaviour, the Soviet Union apparently shipped \$40 million worth of oil to the United States⁷² and \$135.6 million to the Netherlands.⁷³ The benefits accruing to the USSR from these shipments would have been small compared with the political cost of angering the Arabs, which implies that the USSR had a political as well as an economic reason for delivering them.

One likely motive could have stemmed from the Soviet planners' belief that the future of the Soviet Union and CMEA depended on economic cooperation with the industrialised West and imports of technology from it, and thus that any economic disruptions in the West would merely rebound on the Soviet Union.⁷⁴ The Soviet leadership must also have been aware that there would come a point at which the Americans and their allies would no longer be able to tolerate the degree of hardship inflicted upon them by the oil crisis, and would be obliged to take some form of military action. This would almost inevitably lead to a confrontation between the superpowers, something the Soviet Union wished to avoid, even at the cost of exporting oil to the United States.

Many of the so-called benefits of the "oil weapon" to the Soviet Union proved to be short-lived. The USSR began to realise that the recession in the capitalist world was due not solely to OPEC price rises but also to cyclical trends inherent in market economies, a fact proved by the recovery of the key industrial Western states.

However, the biggest blow to the USSR came with the lifting of the oil embargo by Arab oil ministers in Vienna, on March 18 1974. In reality the cuts had come to an end in December 1973, when the Arabs announced that they would not be imposing a further 5 per cent reduction in output in January 1974, and reclassified most of the EEC and Japan as "favoured nations" for which they were prepared to run production as normal. By March, following Kissinger's negotiation of the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement, they

lifted the embargo on the United States and in July the embargo on the Netherlands was terminated.⁷⁵ These moves were masterminded by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, who were no doubt concerned that the continuation of the embargo might entail an increasing radicalisation of the Arab world, which would not only endanger their own regimes but also lead to an increase of Soviet influence in the area.⁷⁶ The lifting of the embargo proved particularly disappointing to the USSR since Arab demands for a "total Israeli withdrawal" were not met, and thus the affair could be seen to represent American pressure successfully challenging the entire Arab world and all the world's progressive forces.⁷⁷ It was clear to the USSR that, as in the political arena, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had merely used Soviet interest to put pressure on the Americans and prevent any form of nineteenth century gun-boat diplomacy.

If anything the success of the "oil weapon" has militated against Soviet political interests and ambitions in the Gulf. The new political and economic status of the Gulf states has served to decrease Soviet leverage (never great) over clients and potential clients. After 1973, OAPEC members discovered that their power and wealth were dependent on their ability to maintain unity, and hence ideologies and historic rivalries lost much of their importance, as did former alliances and the classification of Gulf states into pro-Western or pro-Soviet factions. To the detriment of the USSR, nationalisation merely fed nationalistic and pan-Islamic, as opposed to communist, tendencies and progressive states, such as Iraq, became increasingly moderate in outlook.

In the case of Iraq, the agreement concluded with the USSR at a time of weakness in 1972, when they had no choice and were unable to sell their oil elsewhere, suddenly became less convenient because of the rise in prices and the unlimited possibilities for obtaining hard currency from the West. Consequently, although Iraq continued to sell oil to the USSR according to earlier agreements, the volume of Iraqi oil exports to the Soviet Union fell from 11 million tonnes in 1973 to just 3.9 million in 1974 (Table 7, Appendix 2). At the same time, Iraq attempted to become less dependent on the USSR by buying better and cheaper equipment for the development of their oil industry from the West.

Conversely, the oil wealth in the Gulf increased the economic interdependence between the West and the region, and fostered a conservative anti-communist alignment, subsidised by Saudi finance. The alignment was convinced that the health of OAPEC was related to the well-being of the economies of the West, and this belief was illustrated by the Saudi refusal

to endorse substantial price rises in September 1975, along with Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Qatar, on the grounds that they might cause hardship in the West.

Consequently D.R. Spechler and M.C. Spechler concluded in 1977 that:

"the OPEC price policy may not merely fail to serve but may ultimately subvert Soviet political interests in the Middle East."⁷⁸

Soviet Economic Interests in Gulf oil

While Soviet political gains through the oil crisis have been limited, their economic gains are not to be dismissed. The rise in oil prices and greater Soviet involvement in oil marketing coincided with the shift of the centre of gravity of the Soviet oil industry eastwards to Siberia, where production and transport to the centres of consumption are far more costly. These costs, and the rise in price of Western products which the USSR needed to purchase, were compensated by increased Soviet revenue as a net oil exporter.

At the same time however, the Soviet ability to benefit from the oil crisis has been hampered by their inability significantly to increase their oil production over their oil 'commitments'.

The Economic Issue

The Soviet Union has four broad supply categories.⁷⁹ The essentially cautious stance of Soviet foreign policy is reflected in the overriding importance of the first two categories, the maintenance of its own military and economic machine, and the supplying of 75-90 per cent of the oil requirements of its East European satellites, both of which serve to consolidate the Soviet position. Yet, as the cold war has dissipated, the USSR has placed a high priority on the negotiation of commercial agreements to supply oil to the West and the Third World, which have the attraction of a political pay-off as well as the opportunity to obtain convertible currency.

However, in the face of growing possibilities for the sale of Soviet oil abroad, the rapidly increasing domestic consumption is diminishing the growth of exportable surplus. While Soviet oil production has grown, since 1968, at an average rate of 6.3 per cent per annum to the 1978 level of 572 million tonnes, consumption in the same period has risen at the rate of 6.2 per cent per annum, reaching 412.8 million tonnes.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, the most recent statistics depict Soviet oil production as increasing relative to oil consumption (Table 5, Appendix 2).

Yet in view of the desire to increase exports to hard currency markets, and of forecasts that CMEA members will require about 80-100 million tonnes

in the 1980s, compared with only 48-50 million in 1971,⁸¹ doubts have been expressed regarding Soviet ability to maintain self-sufficiency in oil. Indeed, while the USSR remains a net oil exporter, its oil imports, particularly from Iraq, have been rising steadily (Table 7, Appendix 2).

However, the issue is not one of actual oil shortages, for published proven oil reserves are high, the USSR being estimated to possess some 10.9 per cent and 36.1 per cent of the world's proven reserves of oil and gas respectively.⁸² Rather, it is due to the shortage of good quality oil, Soviet oil generally having a high sulphur and paraffin content and an undesirable specific gravity (costs are also high in the new fields of Siberia and rising all the time in the traditional oil-producing areas of the north Caucasus, Soviet Azerbaijan and the Volga-Ural region).⁸³ Overall it has been estimated that the cost of extracting oil in the Siberian oilfields has risen by a factor of three since 1965, reaching \$14 a barrel in 1979, compared to only approximately 25 cents a barrel for extracting Saudi Arabian crude.⁸⁴

late It follows that the Soviet Union's purchases of Gulf oil were encouraged by its low cost, high quality, supply security (the Gulf having some 56.9 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves in 1978⁸⁵) and the savings in transport costs which could be made by reselling Gulf oil to Asian states or Eastern Europe, thus releasing its own costly oil for export to the West. Indeed, even after the 1979 price rises, it remains more practical in certain parts of the Soviet Union to import oil from the Gulf rather than to bring it from Siberia, and to sell West Siberian oil to Europe and East Siberian oil to Japan. Consequently the USSR has adopted the role of a 'middle man' with much of the oil that it purchases, a role apparently approved by the Arabs.⁸⁶ On account of the high costs of new oil developments in the Soviet Union and the political obstacles impeding any capitalist involvement in Soviet oil production, Soviet oil imports from the Gulf are likely to increase.

Soviet Oil Trade Forecasts

Speculation over Soviet ability to maintain an autarchic policy with respect to oil is not a recent phenomenon. As early as the 1960s, Albinowski⁸⁷ and Rachkov⁸⁸ predicted that by 1980 the USSR and its allies would be importing around 100 million tonnes of oil. These predictions were given substance in the mid-1960s by the Soviet Union's warning to CMEA members that, from the 1970s, they would no longer be able to fulfill their oil requirements and that therefore they should look for additional sources. Subsequently Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany all went on to make 'aid for oil' trade agreements with Iraq, while Rumania and Czechoslovakia established barter agreements for Iranian oil. At the same time the Soviet Union,

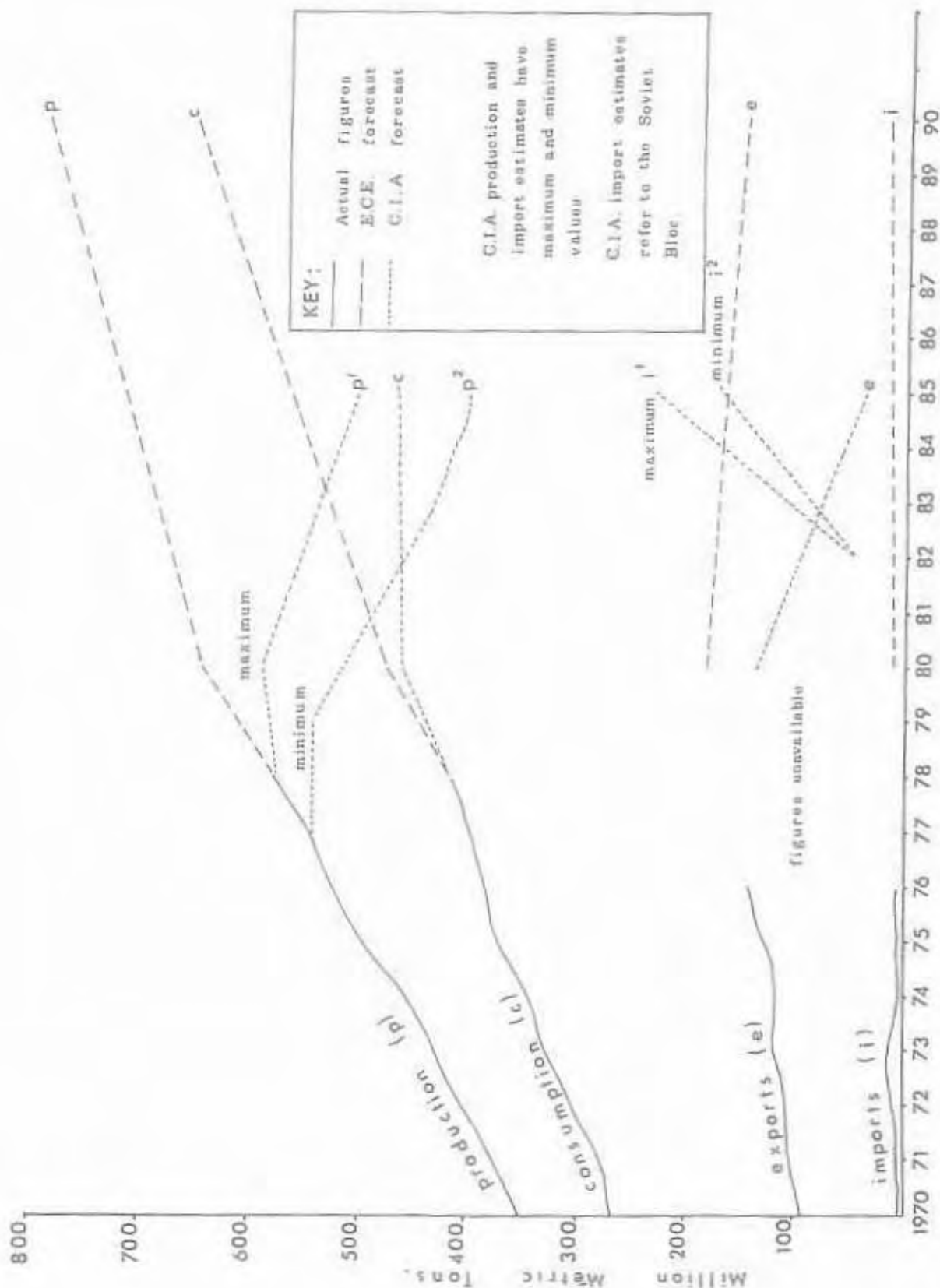


Fig. 1. Sources and uses of Soviet oil : forecasts for the 1980s
(C.I.A. 1977 and 1979; E.C.E. 1979)

anxious to preserve its large portion of the East European market, suggested to bloc members the wisdom of investing money and equipment in the development of the Siberian fields in return for repayment in crude oil.⁸⁹

More recently, a picture of declining fuel exports for the Soviet Union during the 1980s, based on falling domestic production, is painted by the CIA. According to the survey in April 1979,⁹⁰ the USSR was producing a record 11.73 million barrels a day, but the total has been dropping steadily since to approximately 11.5 million barrels a day by August 1979 and the CIA predict it will fall to around 10 million barrels a day or 500 million tonnes a year by 1985. On this basis the CIA estimates that Soviet oil production would peak at 590 million tonnes in 1980. The problem, as the CIA saw it, was not that the USSR could not produce more oil, but rather that she could not produce it in time to obviate the necessity of importing Gulf oil. At the same time, the CIA believes domestic consumption in the Soviet bloc will spiral upwards, so that by 1982 the Soviet Union and her communist bloc allies may need to import up to 700,000 barrels daily. This new CIA report updates similar conclusions reached in 1977⁹¹ when the agency was chided for predicting that the Soviet bloc would be importing between 174.3 and 224.1 million tonnes (Figure 1).

However, critics have accused the CIA of playing with facts to support President Carter's energy programme, while Petro Studies have accused the CIA of attempting to colour the Arab world's interpretation of Soviet intentions in the Gulf, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, the CIA has been charged with failing to take into account the Kremlin's ability to impose strict oil conservation measures.⁹²

Recent studies by Shell International and by the Petroleum Industry Research Foundation^{93,94} have both criticised the CIA findings, predicting instead that Soviet bloc oil exports will have ceased or will equal oil import needs at around 150 million tonnes by 1985.

Though deprecating all talk of a sharp decline in Soviet production, the Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in a study in May 1978, nonetheless found evidence that the period of rapid growth in the Soviet Union's crude oil production was coming to an end.⁹⁵ The report worked on the assumption that output, broadly in line with the present five-year plan, would reach 640 million tonnes by 1980 and 780 million tonnes by 1990. Total exports are expected to decline after 1980, with Soviet oil imports forecast to rise slowly to reach 15 million tonnes by 1990 (Figure 1).

In contrast to the reports mentioned, an analysis by Petro Studies in 1977 concluded that the USSR was poised to triple its oil exports to the West by 1985, on account of the fact that the Soviets are under-producing from their major oil fields.⁹⁶ However, this report has been criticised as erring as far in the optimistic direction as the much-maligned CIA reports erred in their pessimism.

With the exception of the Petro Studies report, the most important general conclusion to be drawn from these forecasts is that the Soviet Union and its East European satellites may emerge as important competitors for oil from the Gulf by 1985, at a time when, even if OPEC produces at maximum levels, the world is likely to be short of between 4 and 12 million barrels a day.⁹⁷ In the face of a forecast of domestic oil shortage, the only alternatives for the USSR lie in either decreasing domestic consumption, which is barely feasible in view of recent Soviet economic problems despite the growth in gas production, or encouraging its allies to buy crude oil themselves^{98,99} and decreasing oil exports to the West. The latter two approaches are both impracticable.

The Soviet Union as an Oil Importer?

Already there have been a number of indications that the USSR is intending to purchase increasing quantities of oil from overseas. Perhaps the clearest of these has come from the Saudi Arabian oil minister Sheikh Yamani, who is reported to have said that the USSR would change from an oil exporter to an oil importer, a conclusion he reached on the basis of the USSR approaching at least one OPEC member (not Saudi Arabia) to buy crude oil on a long term basis.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, although the growth of the Soviet tanker fleet has been slow, the nationalisation of oil-exporting arrangements with Spain, Cuba and Venezuela, has given the Soviets a large potential tanker surplus with which to import Gulf oil.¹⁰¹ Even more interesting in this context is the Western media's devious interpretation of the Onassis-Kauzov marriage as a Soviet ploy to take over the Greek shipping empire from whom they were already chartering tankers.¹⁰²

Yet, to date, Soviet imports of both oil and gas have been of minor significance, with crude oil deliveries from Iraq actually declining from 5.8 million tonnes in 1976 to only 4.6 million in 1977.¹⁰³ While Iraqi oil exports to the USSR rose to 6.2 million tonnes in 1978,¹⁰⁴ the initial evidence from 1979 suggests that this figure will once again drop. In the first quarter of 1979, Iraq exported oil to the Soviet Union to the value of \$55 million, a fall of some \$60-65 million from the comparable period in 1978.¹⁰⁵ When the

large oil price increases at the beginning of 1979 are taken into account it can be concluded that, while the value of Soviet oil imports from Iraq has fallen some 46-48 per cent, the volume of oil imports has been cut substantially by about 65-70 per cent.

Conversely, the value of Libyan oil exports to the Soviet Union in the afore-mentioned periods increased from \$25 million in 1978 to \$80 million in 1979.¹⁰⁶ Working on the basis of value figures for Soviet imports of Libyan "fuel and minerals", assuming these imports are mostly oil and taking the average price of Libyan crude in 1977 and in 1978, figures for Libyan oil exports to the Soviet Union in these years may be arrived at, which support the trend implied above (Table 7, Appendix 2). However, this trend is likely to be a short-term one, as by itself Libya is unlikely to be able to fulfil the predicted future oil import requirements of the USSR on terms convenient to the latter. The problem facing the Soviet Union is that, while importing oil to resell to others is the most desirable course of action, they have little to offer oil-producing states in exchange for oil.

"Aid for Oil" Projects

ii, In 1976, the Soviet Union embarked on a massive series of "oil for aid" agreements in Iraq. Aid was supplied for developing still further the North Rumaila and Nahr Umr fields, and the Soviet Union was scheduled to build a pipeline from Baghdad to Basra and an oil depot at Nahr Umr. Later in 1976, a \$1 billion protocol was signed involving the exchange of Soviet road and construction vehicles and irrigation and power projects, including the Haditha Dam, for Iraqi oil and dates.

Baghdad's ability to pay cash for products has given Moscow stiff competition from Western suppliers in bidding for development contracts. Furthermore the Soviet Union has been slow to devise and aid oil projects, and technicians selected on political grounds rather than merit perform poorly in exploration and refining, a fact which has stimulated Iraq's economic contacts with the West.

Reacting to the threat of competition, Moscow was thus moved in 1977 to secure its participation in new projects and to implement the \$1 billion worth of aid and commercial contracts signed in 1976.¹⁰⁷ A further \$2 billion of new irrigation and power projects, including the building of the Mosul Dam, were thus initiated with much of this activity reputedly being paid for in oil.¹⁰⁸

In 1977 it was reported that the Soviet Union had reached an oil barter deal in principle with Iraq, for the sale of around 8 million barrels

of oil, possibly in exchange for Soviet road-building projects and aid in the construction of a \$3 billion, 1000 km gas pipeline to run from the south of Iran to the Soviet border.¹⁰⁹

The problem facing the CMEA states is whether, by a proliferation of such schemes, they can ensure the supply of significant amounts of OPEC oil on a repayment basis to satisfy their import needs in the 1980s until their own 'latent' reserves come on, so that they do not have to expend their meagre supplies of hard currency. While Iraq is still obtaining a relatively low per capita income from its oil exports and therefore is interested in boosting its oil production, with outside help if necessary, the increasingly conservative attitude of other OPEC members towards increasing oil production, and the comparative unattractiveness of Soviet aid, could well lead to a decline in 'aid for oil' projects.

Future Policy Orientation

The USSR could thus find itself caught in a vicious circle of not being able to develop its own resources for the future because it cannot afford the necessary equipment, owing to the fact that all available foreign currency is being used to pay for oil imports.¹¹⁰ Under such circumstances the USSR would in time become increasingly dependent on the major oil-producers in the Gulf and subsequently be slowly pulled into the world energy crisis, without having the means to break free. This could activate what Berry¹¹¹ refers to as a 'Soviet Colonial Policy', the USSR seeking direct access to or partial control over the Gulf. Alternatively, and more realistically in the present climate, McLaurin¹¹² concluded that, in view of the growing role of the USSR in Middle Eastern oil affairs and the emphasis on finding new 'oil for aid' agreement recipients, Soviet policy will continue to be commercially-orientated.¹¹³ Yet, as the states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself become more dependent on Gulf oil, like the West they will become more captive to the inherent explosiveness of the political situation in the Middle East, while enjoying far less influence over it than the West.

The record of Soviet conduct is thus one of caution, being based on the twin premises first, that it would be imprudent to jeopardise the future supply of what, by 1985, could amount to over 10 per cent of total CMEA oil requirements and secondly that, if the capitalist world is going to collapse on the energy issue, then it should do so through conflict with the oil producing states themselves. Campbell¹¹⁴ stressed that the indicated role for the socialist world would be to stay outside the conflict, profiting

from it, but not intervening except in the case of direct Western involvement. This no doubt goes some way to explaining the recent increased Soviet oil imports from North Africa, coming as they do at a time when the Gulf is in political turmoil. Consequently Soviet policy has been more supportive of stability than turbulence, being limited to encouraging higher prices, which, although shortening the periods of oil repayments, do make Soviet oil more economically viable and exports more prosperous. Such a stance enables the Soviet Union not only to maintain its essential economic relations with the West, but also to sell them Soviet oil and gas at the high prices determined by OPEC.

3. THE MILITARY ACTIVITIES OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE GULF

Claims that the Soviet Union now attaches great priority to gaining access to Gulf oil have inevitably served to focus attention on the military options open to the USSR which could be utilised in the pursuit of political, economic and security objectives. To the extent that the military activities of the superpowers have been limited by the nuclear balance of fear and the importance attached to detente, various modes of activity continue to remain open to both the USA and the USSR. As the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger remarked in 1976, no doubt drawing on the growth of Soviet conventional and naval power and on the USSR's expanding global reach,

"Beneath the nuclear umbrella the temptation to probe with regional forces or proxy wars increases".¹¹⁵

Nowhere is this 'probing' more apparent than in the Middle East. Here the acute instability of the political system as it emerged from imperial guardianship was such that there were few states which did not begin to look outside the region for arms and protection. Equally, the strategic significance of the region as an arm of the Indian Ocean, and the dependence of the international system on oil, ensured that both the USA and the Soviet Union were willing to offer assistance.

Consequently Soviet military activities in the Gulf, while practically non-existent prior to 1958, now span the six broad categories of arms transfers, training, facilities, forces, exercises and visits,¹¹⁶ although all are centred in Iraq.

Arms Transfers

In the Soviet drive to gain influence and to weaken the position of the West in the Gulf, military arms transfers have clearly emerged as the most durable instrument in Moscow's diplomatic repertoire. In particular they aid the cultivation of relations with national armies, which the Soviet Union considers the most important instruments of progressive social development.¹¹⁷ The Gulf states' appetites for arms offers the Soviet Union one of its most important means of exercising political, strategic and psychological influence, since the arms link is one of the few types of aid which Moscow can offer its allies, when the economic and technological assistance of the West is more attractive. In this context arms can also provide the USSR with an important source of foreign exchange and serve as an attractive form of aid to barter for oil.¹¹⁸

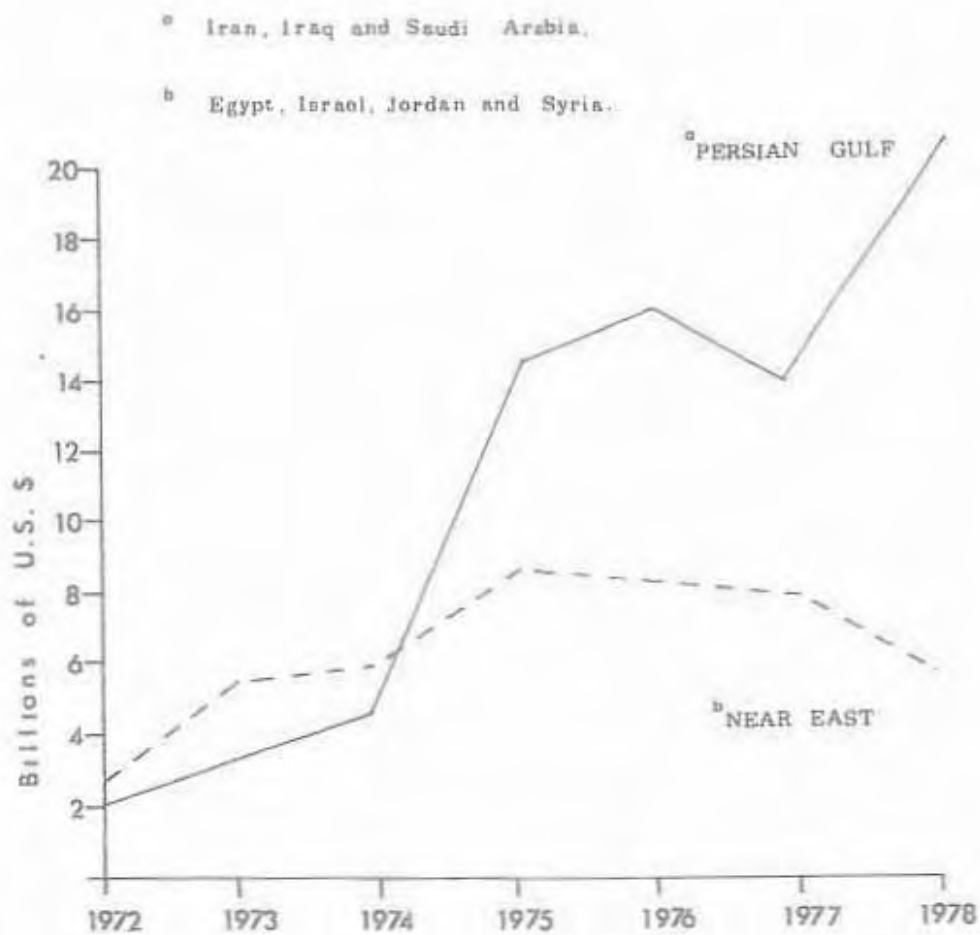
It was in the guise of an armourer and protector that the Soviet Union made its military debut in the Gulf, Soviet arms arriving in Iraq shortly after the 1958 Revolution. Though Soviet military aid was temporarily suspended in 1964, by 1967 Iraq was virtually dependent on the USSR for its arms supplies, having received more than \$500 million-worth of military aid.¹¹⁹ In the years 1967 to 1976, with the impetus of the growing arms races in both the Gulf and the near Middle East and the 1972 Friendship Treaty, Iraq received Soviet arms to the value of \$1.7 billion (Table 8, Appendix 3), a quantity which accounted for 14 per cent of total Soviet military deliveries to the Third World.¹²⁰ The Soviet Union supplied 73 per cent by value of Iraq's total military imports in this period, although this level of dependence was not emulated elsewhere in the Gulf, the limited scope of Soviet deliveries to the area being reflected in the fact that Iraq accounted for 75 per cent of them.

The significance of Soviet military aid to Iraq (and therefore to the Gulf) has increased directly since 1973, as a result of the decline in the overall Soviet military Middle Eastern assistance programme (Table 9, Appendix 3). Although this decline was related to the 1973 October War, it was also due to the expulsion of Soviet influence from Egypt and the cooling of the Soviet-Syrian relationship in the mid-1970s, both of these states having been major recipients of Soviet aid.¹²¹ Consequently the \$4 billion Soviet arms protocol signed with Iraq in August 1976, propelled Baghdad into the first place among current Soviet arms recipients.¹²²

Soviet military transfers in the Gulf have not been confined to Iraq. Clearly, military aid was rendered to revolutionary movements operating in the area in the early 1970s, the most important of which was the PFLOAG, although such aid was reputedly not extensive.¹²³

The Soviet Union scored a notable success in trying to break through the Western containment barrier with the much publicised \$110 million deal with Iran in December 1967, capitalising on Iranian dissatisfaction with the United States' refusal to send arms to Pakistan during the Indo-Pakistani War in 1965.¹²⁴ Since then, a number of minor transactions have been recorded (particularly in the years 1971-74), to the extent that between 1967 and 1976 Iran received \$611 million-worth of Soviet military aid, an amount second only to the massive \$3.8 billion-worth of aid delivered by the United States (Table 8, Appendix 3).

Up to 1974 the Soviet military aid programme was governed by a number of self-imposed restrictions.¹²⁵ The Soviets had no intention of generating reckless overconfidence in Arab regimes, which could lead them towards hasty



Data Source: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, "The Military Balance 1979-1980."

Fig. 2. Military expenditure in the Middle East.

ill-planned offensives against Israel.¹²⁶ They were equally determined not to allow any one Arab state to become so strong that it could act independently. Hence, prior to 1973, the Soviet Union, in contrast to the West, consistently refrained from introducing technologically decisive weapons or from providing certain types of offensive systems desired by the Arabs. Indeed, before the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967, much of the military equipment sent to Iraq was not only obsolete but supplied without adequate training or supplies.¹²⁷ Likewise, given the traditional Arab-Iranian rivalry, the USSR was careful to transfer to Iran only non-aggressive weapons, as was illustrated in the 1967 agreement where Iranian requests for missiles were refused, deliveries being confined to anti-aircraft guns and armoured vehicles.¹²⁸ In short, the Soviet military aid policy ensured that, while local tensions were exacerbated, thereby ensuring military dependency, no client had the capability to alter the status quo and therefore threaten detente.

This policy was to change in the early 1970s as a result of two events.

First, in May 1972, President Nixon visited Tehran and agreed to sell the Iranians any conventional weapons they required, under the auspices of the 1969 Guam/Nixon Doctrine.¹²⁹ In particular, he agreed to provide Iran with F-14 and F-15 combat aircraft, the most advanced then in existence.¹³⁰ In response, the Soviet Union, while exporting conventional MiG-17 and MiG-21 combat aircraft to Iraq in the 1960s, now began to deliver Tu-22 Blinder medium-range bombers, an aircraft easily adaptable to a nuclear delivery system.¹³¹ Although the delivery occurred prior to the October War, curiously no mention was made of the aircraft being used in the War.¹³² This would suggest that the Soviet motive in supplying the aircraft was more political than military, the move being an attempt to reassure its Arab clients that they could continue to rely on the Soviet Union for advanced military equipment.¹³³

The second significant event followed the October 1973 War and the dramatic rise of oil revenues, when the Arab states of the Gulf and Iran began to embark on major rearmament programmes to bolster their security in a region beset with political conflict and to fill the vacuum created after the 1973 defeat. These programmes involved a quantitative military build-up, with an emphasis on capital-intensive military technology, such as aircraft and missiles, the effectiveness of which had been demonstrated by the Israelis in 1967 and 1973. Consequently, by 1975 the military expenditure of the major states of the Gulf exceeded that of the states most directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict (Figure 2), and so the Gulf became the scene of a major arms race.¹³⁴

This event served to accentuate dramatically the already established trend of competitive arms deliveries between the superpowers. By October 1974, the Soviet Union had introduced MiG-23s (one of the most modern fighters in the Soviet inventory) to Iraq, probably in response to Iran's announcement that it was to purchase 80 advanced US F-14 fighters.¹³⁵ It was also reported that the Soviet Union had made MiG-23 aircraft available to Kuwait in 1974 and Kemp concluded that they would have delivered them to Iran, had the Shah requested them.¹³⁶

The apparent willingness of the Soviet Union to supply potential adversaries of Iraq stemmed from the growing independence and power of the oil states, who, although being slow to initiate import substitution projects,¹³⁷ had nonetheless sought to diversify their sources of supply outside traditional relationships. It had become apparent to the Soviet Union that, with the rising demand for oil and the increasing wealth of the region, political and economic initiatives now lay with the states of the Gulf rather than with the superpowers. These states now had the ability to play one superpower off against another in the event of having their demands for sophisticated weaponry rejected. Consequently, the USSR had found it difficult to keep within their arms limitations, especially since she was now faced with the choice of trading off her fading political influence for much-needed hard currency and oil. In view of her need to maximise the number of 'aid for oil' projects, this turn of events was to the Soviet Union's advantage.

Thus, after 1974, the financial motive generally became more prominent in Soviet arms transfers to the Middle East, to the extent that the USSR was actually supplying arms to both sides in the wars in the Horn of Africa and the Yemens. Soviet prices for military equipment have usually been below their free market value¹³⁸ and their attraction has been enhanced by their repayment terms, the Soviet Union offering loans on easy terms¹³⁹ or being prepared to receive payment in kind. While this imposed an economic burden on the USSR, it nevertheless placed a strategic and political obligation on the recipients and served to link Arab commodity exports to the Soviet economy. Since 1974 however, the increased emphasis on military aid to oil states, as concluded by Ro'i¹⁴⁰ (Table 2, Appendix 1) and the rising proportion of hard currency arms sales as opposed to those on credit, have both reflected Soviet efforts to economise on military aid. Indeed it is more than plausible that most of the Soviet military aid delivered to the Gulf in 1974 and 1975 represented profitable commercial arms deals and, while there may have been some political exchange, clearly the recipients' non-economic obligations could not have been very large.¹⁴¹

In December 1976, the USSR concluded a \$400 million military agreement with Kuwait for surface-to-air missiles, her first with a conservative Arab state.¹⁴² This transaction was possibly more significant in that it coincided with the major protocol agreed with Iraq in August and a \$414 million arms accord signed with Iran in November, her largest to date with that state.¹⁴³ Taken together, these agreements represented a major Soviet attempt to break into the Western-dominated Gulf arms market. However the timing of these transactions, when Soviet influence in the Gulf was generally at a low ebb, suggests that they owed more to the desire to build political rather than economic influence.

The Iraq agreement had a clear political content, as the Soviet Union guaranteed support for Iraq in the event of the Kurdish revolt resurfacing and in Iraq's claims on Kuwaiti territory.¹⁴⁴ Conversely, in purchasing Soviet arms Kuwait no doubt hoped that this support might take the form of a restraining influence on Iraq in their border dispute.

The Kuwaiti agreement is also claimed to reflect Kuwaiti dissatisfaction with Western missile technology for, when it came to the deployment of sophisticated surface-to-air missiles, the Soviet versions proved themselves effective in 1973.¹⁴⁵ Subsequently the Soviet Union went on to conclude a further agreement for surface-to-air missiles with Kuwait, worth \$100 million, in 1978.¹⁴⁶

Politically, the dependence on arms to bind its Middle Eastern allies, explains to a large extent the instability of Soviet alliances in the area and also the continual self-defeating attempts by Moscow to manipulate the flow of arms in order to control its clients.¹⁴⁷ Soviet attempts to bring Iraq into its orbit using such coercive tactics have all failed and consequently Iraq, while stressing its strategic alliance with the USSR against imperialism, has none-the-less been developing varying degrees of political and economic contact with the West.

Iraq's attempts to diversify its source of military imports first became evident in 1976, when she concluded a deal with Lockheed (USA) for eight transport planes, a significant incursion into the jealously-guarded Soviet Middle Eastern aircraft market.¹⁴⁸ In a dramatic move to demonstrate its independence from Moscow, in June 1979 Iraq announced that she was considering plans to buy sophisticated military hardware from Spain and France, worth \$2.5 billion.¹⁴⁹ Iraq's arms purchases from France are expected to account for 64 per cent of this figure over the next five years and eventually France may become Iraq's main arms supplier. Some observers in Beirut believe that the principal motive behind Iraq's arms policy has been the Soviet

reluctance to supply Iraq with the weapons needed to restore the strategic balance with Israel, the balance having been disrupted by the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.¹⁵⁰

The impending break-up of what used to be a virtual Soviet monopoly of arms supplies to Iraq has led to claims that the Soviet Union no longer considers arms sales to the region to be of major importance.¹⁵¹ Such a conclusion is clearly premature for, although the political leverage derived from sales themselves has been reduced, the Soviet Union has built up Iraq to be the most heavily-armed state in the Gulf per head of military personnel (Tables 10,11 and 12, Appendix 3) and, with the continual delivery of advanced military technology, this has deepened Soviet involvement by necessitating the despatch of Soviet advisers and technical experts. Together with the Soviet restrictions on spare parts, which are relatively strict in order to preclude major wars of a long duration, the USSR has thus managed to maintain an element of control and influence.

Training

Soviet military advisory assistance and training in the Gulf have inevitably been confined, by and large, to Iraq (Table 13 Appendix 3), although they were offered to the PFLOAG in the early 1970s.¹⁵² In 1977 it was estimated that there were 1,150 Soviet and East European advisers in Iraq, some 11 per cent of the Soviet total in less-developed countries.

In any arms package the Soviet Union generally insists on placing its advisers in the army concerned. In theory, apart from training and assistance, the interaction between local and Soviet personnel should contribute to admiration, affection and a positive orientation towards the latter and the Soviet Union. Furthermore 'in country' personnel are likely to have a direct influence on the policy and performance of the host nationals and to establish potentially useful contacts with them. While there is evidence to support these assumptions, not least Kuwait's refusal of advisory assistance with its purchases of Soviet arms, McLaurin¹⁵³ concluded that the situation is more complex.

The presence of sizeable numbers of foreign military personnel in an environment such as Iraq or the PDRY, which has been embroiled in a number of conflicts, threatens to involve Soviet personnel in delicate problems and may create a sensitive political situation for the Soviet Union. In Iraq in mid-1974, for example, it was claimed that Soviet ground force advisers and pilots flying Tu-22 bombers were involved in high altitude bombing strikes on the Kurds, the first reported combat role for Soviet personnel since the clash of Soviet-manned Egyptian MiGs with Israeli aircraft in 1970.¹⁵⁴

Foreign personnel can be a source of irritation in the host state, especially if they are linked to the donor's attempts to control its policy.¹⁵⁵ This was the case in 1975, when Brezhnev caused considerable resentment in Iraq through his demands for the release of political prisoners and for communist representation in the Revolution Command Council.

Consequently, the number of Soviet military advisers in Iraq has been kept comparatively low, the 1977 figure being only twice that of 1971, despite Iraq's rapid military build-up. By comparison, in 1970, there were a total of 4,370 American military technicians working in Iran alone,¹⁵⁶ and, before the Iranian revolution, the Pentagon predicted that by 1980 there could be 150,000 US personnel and their families in the Gulf, working on defence-related contracts.¹⁵⁷

The Soviet Union also provide military instruction for nationals in the USSR and Eastern Europe and, between 1950 and 1977, 4,075 Iraqi and 325 Iranian military personnel were trained in this manner (Table 14, Appendix 3). However, the numbers from Iraq are probably now declining, being offset by increased 'on site' training by Soviet and, since August 1974, Cuban technicians.¹⁵⁸

Facilities

One dimension of Soviet military assistance to Iraq has been the development of military facilities, which has coincided ostensibly with the USSR's growing naval presence in the Indian Ocean. While it has been Soviet policy to denounce foreign bases as a threat to international security and peace, it has nevertheless been claimed that the expansion of Soviet naval activities has created the need for port facilities and for bases from which air reconnaissance and air cover could be provided.¹⁵⁹

Yet, while it is widely believed that the Soviet Union has ambitions for 'warm water' ports in the Indian Ocean,¹⁶⁰ McLaurin¹⁶¹ concluded that the USSR did not appear to seek to acquire any bases in the traditional sense, or to emplace missiles or other advanced weapon systems in the Gulf. The Gulf itself is not particularly important to Soviet security, the American Navy's Middle East Force, based at Jufair (Bahrain) until 1977, having little relevance to superpower nuclear rivalry. Furthermore, until 1979, the political costs of establishing Soviet bases in an area of such critical importance to the West appeared to outweigh any possible benefits and thus the trend has been towards informal basing arrangements.

As part of her naval build-up in the Indian Ocean after 1970, the Soviet Union acquired commercial facilities at Umm Qasr (Iraq) in the Gulf, which complemented her new facilities in Aden, Berbera and Port Mauritius and her

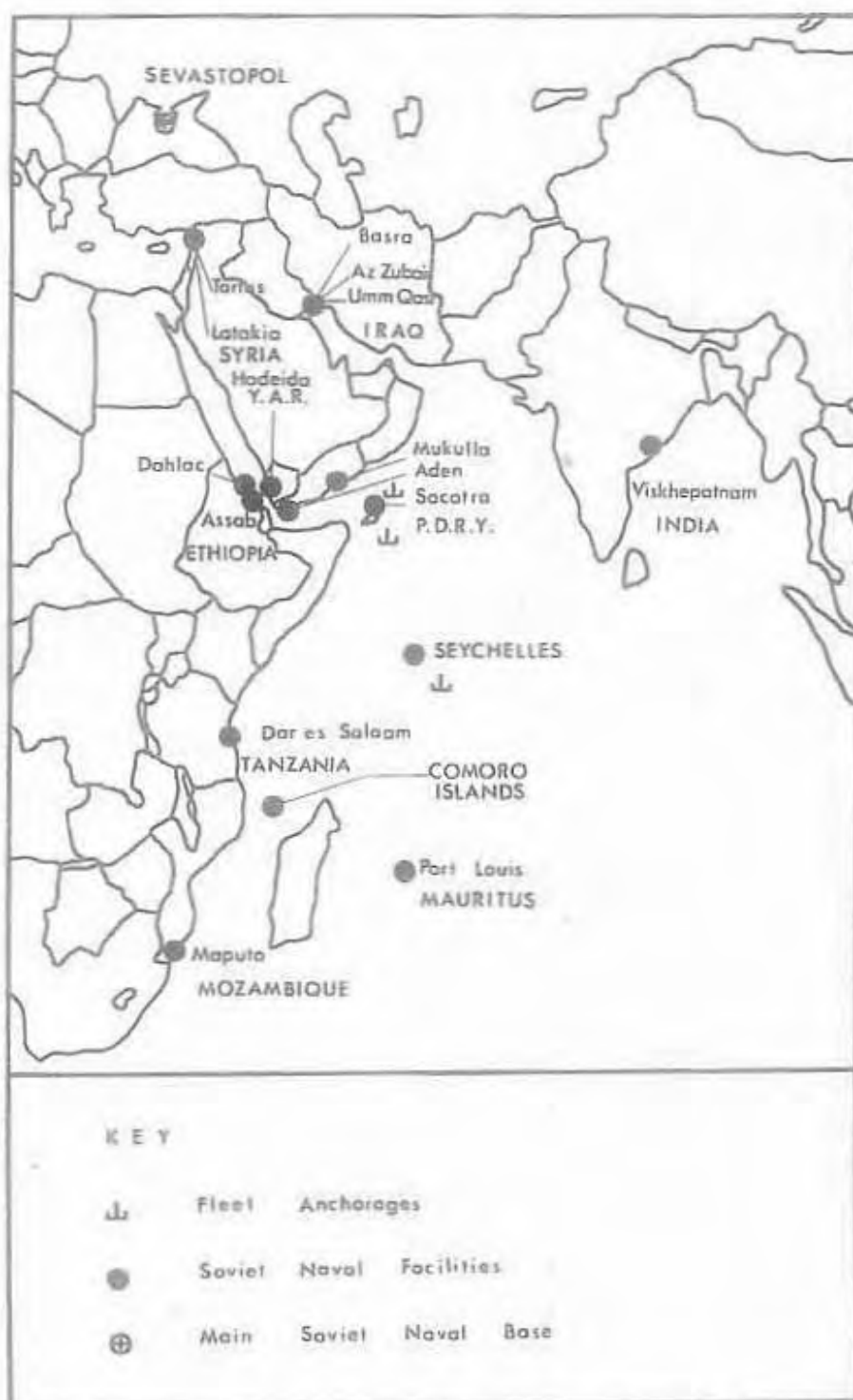


Fig. 3. Facilities, fleet anchorages and moorage buoys of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean.

fleet anchorages north of Socotra Island and in the Seychelles (Figure 3). These commercial facilities were not legal bases, but were maintained merely to expedite repairs and shore replenishment at reduced cost.¹⁶²

This low Soviet naval profile was to change following the 1972 Friendship Treaty with Iraq, which became the basis for technical aid and an intensified Soviet presence. In December 1974, Iraq signed a protocol granting the Soviet forces "unlimited" access to its air bases and naval ports at Fao and Umm Qasr.

Although it was claimed that the installations were to remain under Iraqi military control, these developments nevertheless gave substance to US Defence Department claims that Moscow had been granted base facilities there. However, in February 1975, two American journalists, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, claimed that the Iraqi authorities had allowed them to fly over the port of Umm Qasr, from which they concluded that US Defence Department allegations seemed "grossly inflated".¹⁶³ They described the port as consisting of "only half a dozen jetties built out into the estuary from naked sand", plus a "cluster of sheds, housing, and the head-quarter buildings of the Iraqi Navy". The Iraqi naval commander, Admiral Abolou ad-Dairi, told Evans and Novak that the northern edge of the Gulf was too shallow to accommodate any vessels larger than the minesweepers, coastal patrol boats, torpedo boats and small Soviet-built rocket ships which the Iraqi Navy serviced at Umm Qasr.

However, when the scope of the Irano-Iraqi rapprochement became apparent after 1975, Moscow, concerned that this relationship might weaken its naval position in the Gulf, demanded in April that President Saddam Hussein strengthen the legality of the protocol by making it a formal attachment to Article 3 of the Treaty.¹⁶⁴ The full implications of the formal basing rights remain unclear, but apparently the Soviet Union expected unrestrained landing rights and possibly repair facilities at any one of the then three Iraqi air bases, and was reported to have become involved in constructing port facilities including air defences.

In 1976, the Iranian media reported that the Soviet Union was building giant air communication systems in Iraq at Hurriyya, in the north, and in Kurena, 50 miles from the Iranian border.¹⁶⁵ The arms accord signed between the two states in August 1976, led to the USSR supplying Iraq with 138 MiG-23s, which were to be stationed at Shaib, Iraq's largest air base and consequently it was claimed by the Iranians that Shaib, "had already become a territorial outpost".¹⁶⁶

Nevertheless, although the Soviet Union has gained extensive military facilities in Iraq, she has not attempted to emulate her elaborate facilities in Berbera (up to 1977) and Aden in the Gulf. This decision was no doubt influenced by the vulnerability of large naval forces in the Gulf to interdiction at the Straits of Hormuz by Iran or by a combination of Arab states. More importantly, however, it reflects the fact that the Soviet Union's military and strategic priorities are in the Indian Ocean rather than the Gulf.

Forces

Although the USSR has a large number of advisers and technical experts working in Iraq, she has no permanent military combat forces in the area, and hence the Soviet military presence in the Gulf refers ostensibly to the periodic naval one. For many years, it was not practical for the Soviet Navy to maintain a presence in the Gulf owing to the lack of naval facilities open to them and the area's great distance from the Pacific Ocean and Black Sea, where permanent Soviet fleets were established.

The year 1964 has been considered a watershed in Soviet naval policy.¹⁶⁷ Internal changes in the Soviet Navy, and the potential introduction of the Polaris A3 into the Arabian Sea making the Gulf more central to Soviet strategic planning, prompted the Soviet Union to exploit the concept of forward deployment using port agreements and float support.¹⁶⁸

Yet, while Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean Sea increased, the Gulf remained peripheral to Soviet naval capabilities. It was not until 1968, when the British 'East of Suez' withdrawal announcement coincided with the global projection capabilities of the expanding Soviet Navy, that the Gulf figured in Soviet naval strategy.

Consequently, in 1968, the Soviet Union sent her first sustained naval deployments into the Indian Ocean, in what Moore¹⁶⁹ termed the "Grand Tours", which included visits to the Gulf ports of Umm Qasr (Iraq) and Bandar Abbas (Iran). Since 1969, all the states with a seaboard on the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea and the Gulf, from Tanzania to Bangladesh have received frequent visits from Soviet Naval vessels, with the notable exception of the conservative Arab states of the Gulf.¹⁷⁰ These forces have included elements of nearly every modern class of ship and submarine, presumably for a long-term study of environmental problems. However, since the initial 'Grand Tours', the main Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean has centred on the Arabian Sea/Red Sea areas (Figure 4).

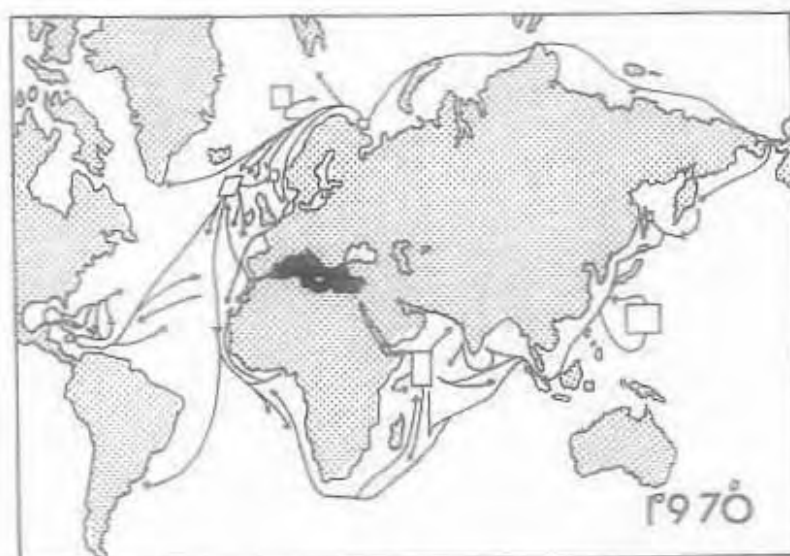
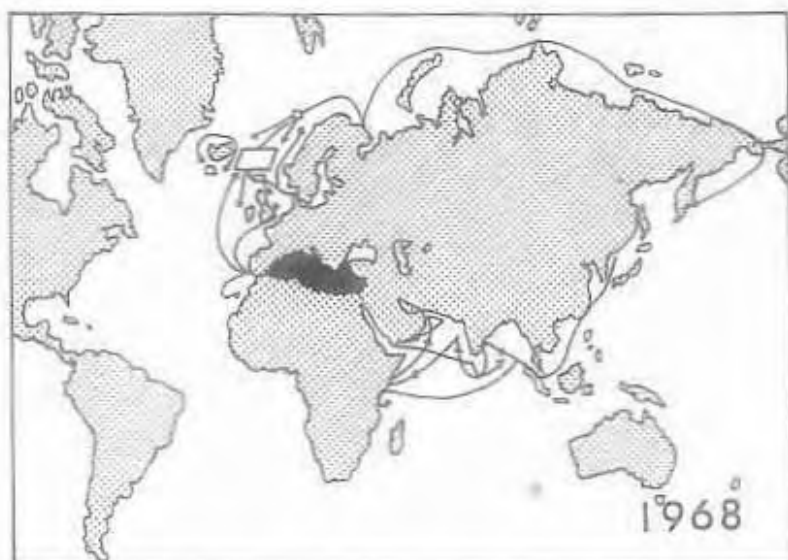
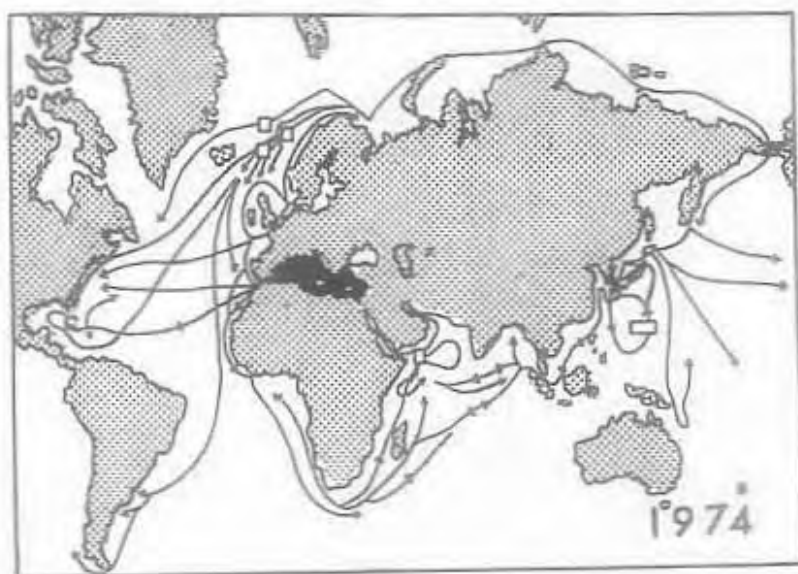
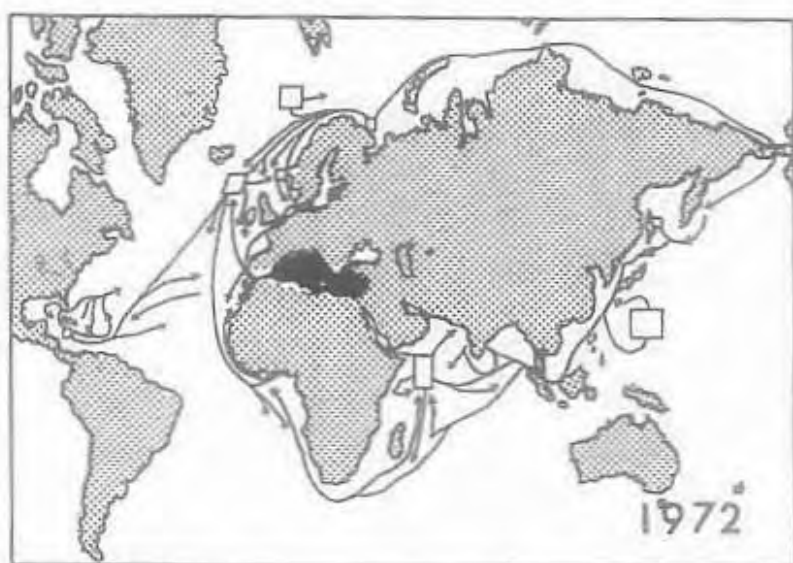


Fig. 4. The build up of Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean, 1968-1974.



Nevertheless, as the size of the Soviet Navy has increased and its experience, contacts and co-operative relations with Indian Ocean states have grown, the Soviet naval presence there and in the Gulf has increased accordingly. Cottrell and Kahn¹⁷¹ calculated that the number of ship-days which Soviet surface warships and auxiliaries spent in the Indian Ocean increased from 1,767 in 1968 to 2,894 in 1975, a rate of growth far in excess of the United States' naval build-up over the same period from 1,786 to 2,058 ship-days. In the period 1968-74, the Soviet Navy made 162 visits to ports in the Indian Ocean, among which 96 were in the Horn, Red Sea and Aden area and 57 in the Gulf and on the Indian sub-continent.¹⁷²

However, in contrast to the Indian Ocean, the Soviet naval presence in the Gulf has not been permanent but in the form of regular visits from naval units deployed on a rotating basis to and from the Indian Ocean. The purpose and policy behind these visits is clearly political, the Gulf's waters being too shallow, clear and confined for US strategic vessels to pose any security threat and the Soviet naval presence not being large enough for any far-reaching objectives, such as interfering with the Western oil routes.¹⁷³ Clearly, the Soviet naval presence represents a 'flag showing' force designed to familiarise Soviet military and naval personnel with the area and to promote the Soviet Union as a familiar and major actor in the Gulf.¹⁷⁴ This apparent use of the Navy as an instrument of Soviet diplomacy has been given doctrinal status through the writings of the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Gorchkov, who stated in 1973 that

"Navies while indispensable (for) armed combat, are also constantly being utilised as an instrument of state policy in peacetime."¹⁷⁵

While it is doubtful whether navies can actually create political ties, they can nonetheless strengthen existing ties and express a tangible commitment to an ally, such as Iraq.¹⁷⁶ This was clearly illustrated in April 1972 when, just five days after the Friendship Treaty was signed, a Soviet naval squadron arrived at Umm Qasr. In this way the Soviet Union was able to demonstrate immediately and effectively its degree of commitment and friendship to Iraq.¹⁷⁷

Soviet naval access to the Gulf has been enhanced by Iraq's naval inadequacies which, in the face of the naval power of their common adversary, Iran (Table 11, Appendix 3), has meant that Iraq is considerably dependent on the naval power of the Soviet Union to preserve the status quo. This dependence, possibly nurtured deliberately through the Soviet military aid programme to Iraq, which until 1976 had an aircraft bias, has meant that the USSR can justify and ensure her naval presence in the Gulf in accordance

with the mutual defence implications of Article 8 of the 1972 Treaty. Furthermore, the Soviet Union thus has the ability to act as a restraining influence in the event of any Iraqi adventures which could damage its relations with Iran and Kuwait.

In this context, the visit paid by Admiral Gorchkov aboard a Soviet cruiser between 3 and 11 April 1973 was intriguing, for it coincided not only with the first anniversary of the Friendship Treaty, but also with Iraq's forcible occupation of the Kuwaiti border post of Al-Samitah (Figure 5). This post is significant, in that it overlooks the major Iraqi naval port of Umm Qasr and commands the sea approaches to the port from the Gulf. Iraq's objectives, however, went beyond this border post as, subsequent to the attack, they demanded that Kuwait should cede the strip of coastline surrounding the border post and the islands of Warba and Bubiyan at the entrance to the channel.

Kelly¹⁷⁸ concluded that the Soviet naval presence was an attempt to demonstrate solidarity with Iraq, as well as manifestly to support border adjustments which would have provided Umm Qasr, and consequently Iraq, with greater economic and physical security. In view of the Iraqi-Soviet differences which had emerged over the Kurds and a 'United Front Government', the crisis provided a good opportunity for the USSR to compensate for its lack of support in past disputes in the area. At the same time however, the Soviet presence was clearly intended to cool down the crisis, since it could have escalated into a serious confrontation between all the states in the region, thereby drawing in the superpowers, and could also have threatened Arab unity for the war against Israel, which was originally planned for Spring 1973.

Nevertheless, despite these factors, Kelly did not rule out the possibility that the Soviet naval presence could have been to deter third-party intervention or to put pressure on Kuwait, or that it might simply have been a routine goodwill visit.

The withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwaiti soil after 5 April 1973, supported Soviet protestations that the purpose of its naval visits was purely peaceful. By entering quietly, building a presence gradually and performing tasks for which it would be appreciated, the USSR began to establish a favourable basis from which its presence could easily be expanded without serious political risk. Consequently the number of Soviet naval visits to Iraq increased from nine in 1968 to sixteen in 1973.¹⁷⁹

At the same time, in a number of cases there is evidence of limited Soviet political and military influence being brought to bear on local issues, which affected Soviet objectives in the region. Thus two visits in

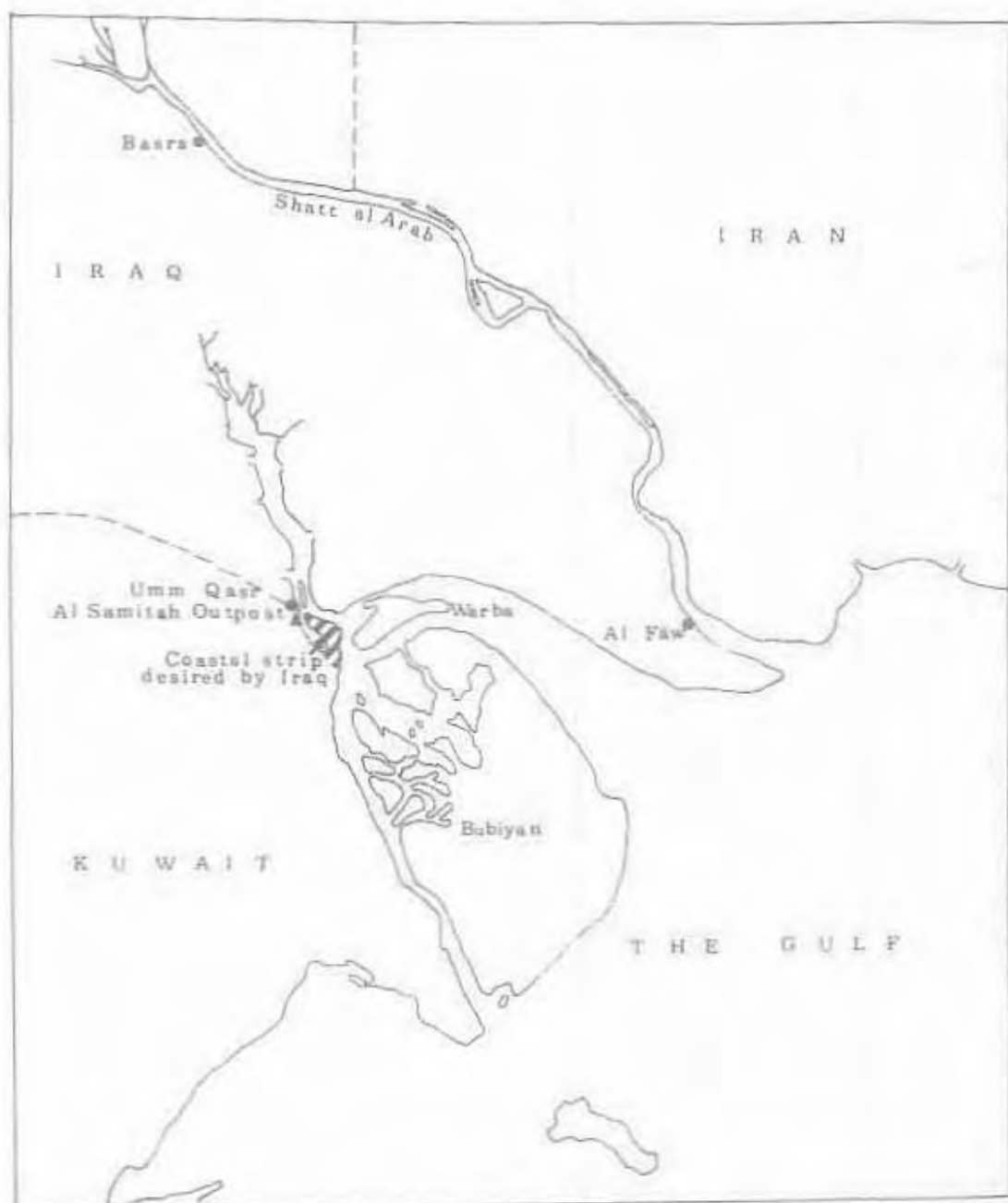


Fig. 5. The Iraqi - Kuwaiti border dispute.

Source: A.M. Kelly, "The Soviet Naval Presence during the Iraqi - Kuwaiti Border Dispute", March/April 1973. Prof. Paper No.122, (Washington: Centre for Naval Analysis, April 1976) p.2.

1969 coincided with Soviet-Iraqi negotiations over oil concessions, while in 1970 Soviet naval visits to Iran and Iraq coincided with a conference of Gulf foreign ministers in Muscat on the subject of Gulf security.

There have been a number of other relatively isolated incidents of Soviet military activity in the Gulf region in the mid-1970s. According to reports in 1975, Soviet intelligence-gathering vessels were maintaining a constant surveillance of the Straits of Hormuz.¹⁸⁰ Soviet MiG-25 aircraft have made a number of flights over Iran, probably, according to Mangold,¹⁸¹ for the purpose of monitoring the Iranian arms build-up, and reference has already been made to Soviet bombing operations in Kurdistan in mid-1974. There have also been periodic Soviet troop movements along the Iranian border in the 1970s, which, coinciding with the Indo-Pakistani war in 1971 and the growing Iranian aid to the Kurds in 1974, have been interpreted as exercises of minatory diplomacy.¹⁸²

However, it would appear that the desire not to offend Iran has acted as an important constraint on Soviet military policy in the Gulf. Besides being a formidable naval power (Table 11, Appendix 3), Iran was also the United States' surrogate policeman in the Gulf and, from 1975 by agreement with Oman, effectively controlled the Straits of Hormuz.¹⁸³ Under the latter agreement, the two states committed themselves to the concept of "innocent passage", with any vessel endangering stability being supposedly refused transit.¹⁸⁴

Although the naval visits of both superpowers have tested the basis of this agreement, neither has taken any important initiative to alter their relative presence in the Gulf, the Soviet Union's moderately increased number of naval visits being matched by a slightly more modern, but not enlarged, US Middle East Force.¹⁸⁵ On the odd occasions when naval operations have threatened to spill over from the Indian Ocean or Arabian Sea into the Gulf, the rival superpower has taken measures to preserve the strategic balance. Thus, in November 1974, the largest maritime exercise in history was held in the approaches to the Gulf, where Soviet naval and air activity had been showing signs of an increase,¹⁸⁶ with the Americans even going so far as to send their aircraft-carrier "Constellation" through Hormuz, the first-ever case of aircraft-carrier diplomacy in the area.¹⁸⁷ Conversely, it is only logical to assume that the presence of a permanent Soviet flotilla so near to the Gulf has had a major influence on OPEC oil policy since 1970, as it has served to mitigate possible Western reaction.¹⁸⁸

From these incidents it can be deduced that U.S. - Soviet rivalry in the Gulf has been largely overshadowed by the more significant nuclear and

strategic rivalry in the Indian Ocean. Consequently the Gulf seems likely to remain a naval backwater in the near future.

Towards A Permanent Presence?

On the face of it, both Moscow and Washington subscribe to the oft-repeated formula that the security of the Gulf must remain the concern of the littoral states, without any intervention from outside. In practice, however, neither side has avoided seeking positions of strength in the region. Besides its foothold in Iraq, the USSR has built up influence in the PDRY, using facilities at Aden and on Socotra, and is now reportedly developing facilities in Ethiopia. At the same time, Soviet arms sales have increased in both number of recipients and quantity. McLaurin¹⁸⁹ concluded that both superpowers are relatively active in most of the military activity categories in the Gulf, though the trend is now towards a growing role for the Soviet Union and a declining one for the United States (Table 15, Appendix 3)

The trend became even clearer in 1979 for, with the downfall of the monarchy in Iran at the beginning of the year and the subsequent neutralisation of the Iranian armed forces, the military balance in the Gulf shifted dramatically in favour of the Soviet Union.

This change has been facilitated in no small way by the potential Soviet military intervention forces around the Gulf (Tables 10, 11 & 12 Appendix 3), which have clearly deterred the United States from making any military involvement in Iran to restore the balance. Within the Soviet Union itself, there are two airborne divisions in the south, with a significant capacity of adequate range to lift one division at a time to the Gulf, and two tactical air armies, each of 250 planes, in the Turkestan and Caucasian military districts.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, although the United States has a Middle East Force of three ships operating in the vicinity of the Gulf, the USSR generally has about eight ships at any one time capable of intervening in the area at short notice.¹⁹¹

While talk of a military vacuum in the Gulf is premature, the Soviet Union has none-the-less appeared to take steps to ensure that its own status and possibly that of Iraq, in the Gulf is enhanced. In July 1979, it was reported that the Soviet Union was negotiating a \$1 billion naval arms deal with Iraq under which the Soviet Union would be able to develop the port of Umm Qasr as a base.¹⁹² The significance of this agreement lies in the fact that it would for the first time allow the development of a port to support a permanent Russian squadron in the Gulf.

Such a flotilla would presumably have a limited military role, large

carriers in particular being ill-suited to the confined waters of the Gulf. Thus the military balance is likely to be at least partially restored on completion of the American naval base at Diego Garcia, which will enable the United States to keep a 'carrier task force' near the Gulf for long periods.¹⁹³

On the other hand, should the Soviet Union acquire a permanent naval presence it would increase her military access to the area and hence her potential for buttressing diplomatic and political initiatives in the littoral states of the Gulf. It would therefore go some way to compensating for the decline in political leverage associated with arms deliveries to Iraq.

Yet, perhaps of more significant value to the USSR would be the psychological impact of such a presence outside the region, for clearly the developing world's perception of Soviet power would be considerably influenced. Furthermore, it might establish a bargaining counter for the Soviet Union in mutual limitations with the United States on naval deployments in the Indian Ocean, which McConnell¹⁹⁴ considers to be the ultimate objective of the Soviet Navy in the area. Certainly the removal of US strategic forces from the Indian Ocean, thereby reducing the risks of Soviet involvement in the area, would represent substantial gains to the Soviet Union in the global strategic competition.

4. THE ARC OF OPPORTUNITY

The collapse of the Shah's regime in Iran on 1 February 1979 served to focus world attention on the political and social instability in a zone stretching across the southern flanks of the Soviet Union, from the Indian sub-continent to Turkey, and southwards through the Gulf to the Horn of Africa. With the wave of Muslim religious fervour that sprang up from Tehran to Karachi, and the military uncertainties in the Horn of Africa and Lebanon, the whole zone could be likened to a geopolitical 'arc of opportunity' for the Soviet Union. Inherent in this assertion is the assumption that the resulting political chaos could well be filled by elements sympathetic to the Soviet Union and hostile to the West.

Even before the Shah was threatened, the political tide throughout the 'arc' could have been construed as running in Moscow's favour. Although the Soviet Union suffered setbacks in Egypt (1972), India (1976) and Somalia (1977), there has been a great increase of Soviet activity in the Rimland of the Gulf.

The first indication of this came at the end of 1977, with the massive Soviet arms airlift to Ethiopia and the active participation of its surrogate forces in Ethiopia's campaign against Somalia and the Eritrean separatist movements. In April 1978, a coup d'état established a pro-Soviet government in Afghanistan, while another in June 1978 strengthened the Soviet hand in the PDYR. At the same time, a number of governments in the 'arc' which were pro-Western had become weakened, most notably in the northern tier states of Pakistan and Turkey.

Consequently, with pro-Moscow regimes in the Rimland, the Soviet Union began to acquire the potential to create a pincer movement around both the Red Sea and the Gulf, through which political pressure could be applied. The only obstacle to such a strategy was Iran.

Iran lies at the centre of the arc and, until the revolution, constituted a bastion of United States military and economic strength, the importance of its oil being matched by its strategic position on the southern borders of the Soviet Union. Under the Guam/Nixon Doctrine it effectively became a United States buffer zone barring Soviet access to the Gulf. Although Iran's ability to act in the arc was either non-existent (Horn of Africa), limited (Oman and Kuwait) or plainly inadequate (the Soviet border), its importance stemmed from its place in the American system of alliances,¹⁹⁵ most notably CENTO, and, with Saudi Arabia, it formed the United States' twin pillar defence policy in the Gulf.¹⁹⁶

As a result, while the Shah's pragmatic and long rule gave Soviet-Iranian relationship a degree of stability and predictability welcome to Moscow, the more assertive diplomacy adopted by the Shah in Asia in the mid-1970s significantly increased the points at which Iran and the Soviet Union clashed.¹⁹⁷

The Iranian Revolution and the Soviet Union

Despite its preference for a more accommodating government, the Soviet Union was careful not to alienate the Shah's regime totally. After all, the USSR was the Shah's third largest arms supplier and had entered into a number of commercial ventures with Iran. A widely held view in the West is that Moscow also preferred the Shah's rule to the uncertainty of what might follow.¹⁹⁸

It was only after mid-December 1978, when the revolution was underway and the overthrow of the monarchy seemed certain, that the Soviet Union increased its criticism of the Shah, but even then it was careful not to support one particular faction in Iran, for fear of alienating others who might assume power. Any criticism in Soviet broadcasts was therefore confined to stressing the diminution of Western influence.¹⁹⁹

Soviet involvement in the revolution is difficult to ascertain. Alarmists such as Moss²⁰⁰ content that Iran's Tudeh Party, under instruction from Moscow, played a direct role in the well-organised strikes of the oil-workers and in the massive demonstrations against the Shah, although the CIA has insisted that it saw no evidence of Soviet involvement in Iran.²⁰¹ It is probable that direct Soviet involvement was limited to covert assistance in the publication of political leaflets, while indirectly Soviet arms reached the masses in small quantities via Afghanistan, according to claims in February 1979.²⁰² Clearly none of these activities alone determined the revolution's outcome, although cumulatively they affected its course.

The subsequent collapse of the Shah's regime in the midst of a resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism was clearly a reaction to the Shah's neglect of Islamic ideals in his development thinking and to the rapid Westernisation of the state. It was, therefore, indirectly a reaction to Western economic and political involvement in Iran, as is reflected in statements by the Ayatollah Khomeini denouncing American imperialism.

Iran, however, has hardly fallen squarely into Soviet hands. On the contrary, the rule of Khomeini is fanatically Islamic and wholly anti-Marxist. Nevertheless, the Revolution has shifted Iran from a pro-Western stance to a vague nationalistic, even idealistic approach, upon which the West can no longer rely. Thus, although the new regime has stressed its intention of adopting a non-aligned political stance and has indicated that it plans to pursue an even policy between Moscow and Washington,²⁰³ many of its new

policies have naturally taken on an anti-Western appearance compared to previous policies. This has given the Soviet Union a new opportunity to pursue its objectives through the well-established policy of supporting a regime which serves Soviet purposes while acting in its own interests.

It follows that the Soviet Union has benefited from the new regime's removal of many of the components of the Western-backed containment barrier to Soviet expansion in the Gulf. The most notable of these has been the Iranians' withdrawal from CENTO on 12 March 1973, on the basis that

"CENTO was no longer effective in protecting²⁰⁴
the rights and interests of member states".

Likewise the termination of American military facilities in Iran and the disintegration of the Shah's CIA-backed secret police, SAVAK, have been well received in Moscow. In particular, the new regime has dismantled the United States' monitoring posts along the 1,400 mile Irano-Soviet border, which will severely curtail the Americans' ability to monitor the movement of aircraft and missiles inside the Soviet Union.²⁰⁵

The Soviet Union has been similarly enthusiastic over the new turnabout of Iranian foreign policy. An oil boycott of South Africa, Israel and Egypt, and the severing of diplomatic relations with these states is clearly in line with basic Soviet policy, as is Iran's recognition of the PLO. Indeed in February, 1979, the PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, became the first national leader to visit the new Republic and the welcome he received obviously delighted Soviet policy planners, not merely because it will strengthen the PLO's bargaining position within and outside the Arab world, but also as it would imply that Iran is likely to become a once-removed confrontation state like Iraq.²⁰⁶

Both Iran and the Soviet Union have emphasised that their relations with each other must be good neighbourly.²⁰⁷ Moscow has been anxious to emphasise the positive side of the revolution, maintaining that conditions are improving and that the authority of the new government is taking hold, in contrast to the chaos suggested by the Western media's reports.

However, the Soviet Union must be concerned with the cracks which are appearing in the political fabric of the new state. In the months of demonstrations that brought down the Shah and his final Prime Minister, Shahpour Bakhtiar, Islam performed a unifying function among the pressure groups and, according to Morrow,²⁰⁸ "several different revolutions coalesced". Now, it appears, they are dividing again, with splits developing between the Fedayeen i Khalq (Marxist-Leninist) and the Mujhedin Khalq (Islamic) and apparent divisions in the Islamic Revolutionary Council emerging. Consequently, the revolution is far from over and its ultimate meaning has yet to become clear.

This has posed a dilemma for the Soviet Union. On the one hand, as Chubin²⁰⁹ has concluded, the USSR has a preference for a weak central government, on the grounds that it would be unable to challenge the Soviet Union and might facilitate the transfer of power to a progressive regime. Conversely, it is only through the strengthening of the central government that the Soviet Union will be able to consolidate her significant gains. Furthermore she must be aware that any split between 'left' and 'right' could give an opportunity to counter-revolutionaries, such as the moderate Bakhtiar, to offer an alternative solution.

Moscow is also reported to be increasingly suspicious of leftist elements, claiming that some have been stirred up by the Americans and Chinese to make life difficult for the new government, thereby creating instability and discrediting the Soviet Union.²¹⁰ The Tudeh Party itself is divided into many factions and the USSR has thus felt unable to give blanket support to the left, quite apart from the fact that it would offend Khomeini and his followers.²¹¹

Soviet policy towards Iran is now as cautious as ever. While Soviet broadcasts to Iran have suggested that it would be in Khomeini's interest not to antagonise or exclude the genuine pro-Moscow supporters from power, they have stressed that this is a problem which should be dealt with by the Iranians themselves. It is more than likely that, after weighing up the dangers and chances of a successful communist takeover in Iran, the Soviet Union, as in 1953, will not undertake an active and subversive role on behalf of the revolutionary forces in Iran. Rather than risk any uncertainty, which could result in the United States regaining influence, they are more likely to give their backing to the new regime. Hence, for the present, the USSR must hope that Iran, under Khomeini, will move more rapidly towards non-alignment and greater cooperation with the Soviet Union, while at the same time continuing to exclude American and Chinese influences.

Repercussions of the Revolution

When the Iranian revolution exploded, the entire arc was concerned. The revolution undermined the stability of all the states in the region, particularly the monarchies, being both a model uniting the left and the right, and a policy, in essence a reaction to over-Westernisation.²¹²

Although Washington believes that its allies, Egypt and Turkey, are the most likely targets for Islamic fundamentalism,²¹³ the question as to whether an Iranian-type situation could happen on the Arab side of the Gulf must be of concern to them. The Arab states of the Gulf do have superficial similarities with pre-revolutionary Iran - autocratic rulers, rapid modernisation,

wealth unevenly spread and growing Islamic enthusiasm - and some have significant Shia Islamic minorities. These groups, encouraged by the triumph of their fellow Shias in Iran and perhaps by outside elements, could make a great deal of trouble for their Governments.²¹⁴

At the same time there exists the possibility that the revolution could be exported by the momentum of religious unrest in a political, secular form amongst the immigrant labour communities in the Arab Gulf states and by Sunni separatist movements throughout the northern tier states of the Gulf. Indeed, the emergence of the Kurdish, Khuzestan and Baluchi separatist movements in Iran has incited similar movements in Iraq, Turkey and Afghanistan. There has been no occasion in recent years across the swathe of non-Arab Muslim states when so much purely political discontent was surfacing violently at the same time and expressing itself in religious euphemisms with which the West is only half familiar.

While there is no reason to suppose that the Soviet Union can do much more than raise its eyebrows at this course of events, when the troubled states are examined as a group they could be deemed to have a policy of at least passive expansion.²¹⁵ Irrespective of whether the revolutionary movement is politically or religiously motivated, its anti-Western character has clearly been to the benefit of the Soviet Union. Furthermore instability is contagious, which implies that the opportunities for the USSR to increase her influence in the region, by channelling covert support to anti-Western elements, are increasing.

A contributing factor to the new opportunities opened up for the Soviet Union is that the downfall of the Shah exposed the limits of Western influence and undermined the credibility of United States' commitments throughout the entire arc.

In reality however, any American intervention in Iran would have violated Clause VI of the 1921 Soviet-Persian Friendship Treaty which specifies that:-

"If a third party should attempt to carry out a policy of usurpation by means of armed intervention in Persia, or if such a Power should desire to use Persian territory as a base for operations against Russia, or if a Foreign Power should threaten the frontiers of Federal Russia or those of its allies, and if the Persian Government should not be able to put a stop to such a menace after having been called upon to do so by Russia, Russia shall have the right to advance her troops into the Persian interior for the purpose of carrying out the military operations necessary for its defence."²¹⁶

This clause, which served as the basis for Soviet intervention in Iran in August, 1941 to prevent occupation by Germany, is just as relevant today, as was reflected in Brezhnev's warning to the Americans on the 19 November 1978

"It must be clear that any interference, especially military interference in the affairs of Persia, a state which directly borders on the Soviet Union, would be regarded by the USSR as a matter affecting its security interests."²¹⁷

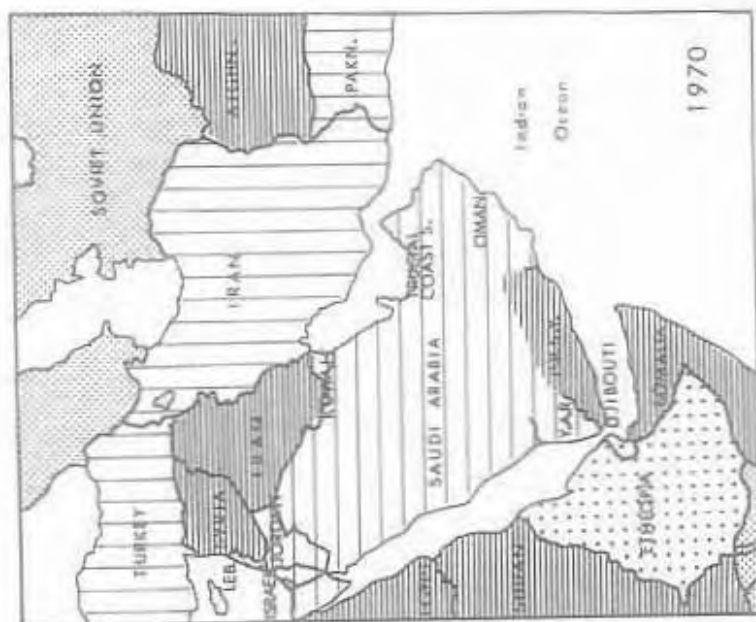
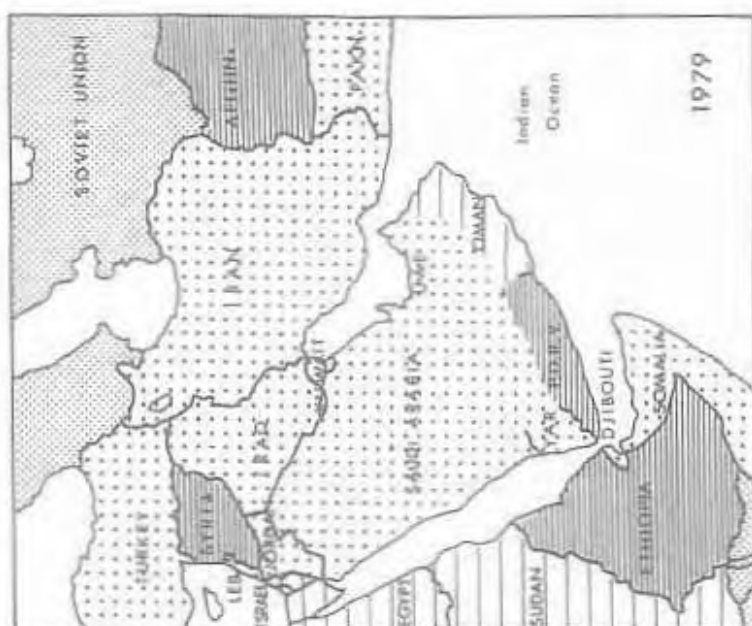
Consequently, after considerable vacillation by President Carter, Secretary of State Vance declared that the United States did not intend to intervene in Iran.

The lack of response by Washington to events in Iran, and of any attempt to counter the Soviet incursions into the arc, has given the impression of the United States as a "toothless tiger", unwilling to engage in any form of direct involvement which brings it into contact with the Soviet Union. As a result, the United States is no longer recognised as the strategically dominant power in the region, making local leaders less inclined to look to the Americans for their security. This was reflected in the demise of CENTO, leading to the removal of effective Western presence south of the Soviet border.²¹⁸

All these factors, together with the new Iranian regime's announcement that its security interests are to be nationally rather than regionally orientated,²¹⁹ have led the conservative Arab regimes of the Gulf to feel exposed not only to internal instability, but also to encirclement by pro-Soviet regimes.

The Saudis in particular would appear vulnerable to claims that the PDRY, with Soviet encouragement, is profiting from events in Iran to go over to the offensive in exporting revolution. The border war between the YAR and PDRY in February 1979 was interpreted by the Saudis as the result of a Soviet-inspired bid, mounted from Aden, to topple the San'a regime and to unite the Yemens under a communist government.²²⁰ From here the Soviet Union could conceivably carry subversion into Saudi Arabia itself. Already there have been a number of PDRY border attacks on Saudi Arabia, the most notable of which were the border war in 1969, an airstrike in 1973 and, more recently, an incident involving ground patrols in 1976.²²¹

Yet the "domino" appearing most threatened in the Gulf is the Saudis' pro-Western neighbour Oman, which remains the West's chief means of securing the entrance to the Gulf,²²² (Figure 6). With its Jordanian and Iranian military guarantees uncertain, the possibility of the Dhofar rebellion flaring up again has increased.²²³ In this connection it is significant that the



USSR influenced states
 U.S. influenced states
 C.E.N.T.O. members
 Non-Aligned states

Fig. 6. The arc of opportunity : a comparison of alliances in 1970 and 1979.

Ayatollah Khomeini has received a PFLO delegation in Tehran and that the Chairman of the PFLO, Abdel-Aziz Qadi, appeared in Moscow in April 1979.²²⁴ Nevertheless, there is no doubt that what the Omanis appear to fear most is a Soviet-inspired attack across their border from the PDRY.

Towards a United Arab Front

In effect, the crisis in Iran merely served to accentuate the deterioration in relations between the conservative Arab world and the United States which had already become apparent following recent American diplomacy in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Much to the satisfaction of the Soviet Union, there has been widespread Arab condemnation of the inadequacies of the Camp David proposals in September 1978 and the subsequent Egypt-Israel peace treaty signed seven months later, in dealing with the Palestinians. Indeed, reaction to the treaty has been so violent that Iraq, once the radical of the Arab camp, has suddenly found itself at the centre of a consensus, or near consensus among Arab states - the closest approach to Arab unity since the 1973 War.

Having been deliberately excluded from the 'peacemaking process', the Soviet Union has been able to appear once again as the Arabs' most loyal and trustworthy ally. Besides giving the Moscow media ideological mileage, Arab disillusionment with the treaty and with President Sadat's resolve has enabled the Soviet Union to cement its ties to a certain extent with Iraq. Moscow has given enthusiastic support to the latter's denunciation of the treaty, no doubt appreciating Iraq's ascendancy over the other radical states and its potential for increasing the distance between Egypt and the conservative Arab states of the Gulf.

Furthermore, among the surprising new alliances forged inadvertently by American diplomacy was the reconciliation between Iraq and Syria. The value to the Soviet Union of this alliance lay in the fact that it strengthened the Arab eastern front against Israel, and in this context it was more likely to favour the diplomatic efforts of Moscow than Washington.²²⁵ Indeed the Soviet Union hoped to ensure this by stepping up its arms shipments to the two states, as indicated by the impending Soviet-Iraqi naval arms accord.

At the same time, the Soviet Union has reached common ground with the traditional conservative Arab regimes in the Gulf over the peace treaty. This was due in no small way to Soviet moves designed to reduce the tension in the Yemen in November 1978, which culminated in the establishment of temporary peace just a few days before the Baghdad summit meeting, thereby ensuring the success of the conference. In reducing apparently pro-Soviet pressures, Moscow was to be rewarded with the West's best ally in the Gulf - Saudi Arabia - joining

ranks with the former rejectionists.²²⁶ The other peninsula Gulf states, taking their lead from the Saudis, followed suit and only Oman, which hopes that Egypt may act as a substitute for Iran, has decided that its interests will be better served outside a united Arab front.

The Soviet reaction to this unusual constellation of radical and moderate regimes has been to encourage further unity and to investigate possibilities of improving relations with moderate regimes. Typical of this policy was the Soviet Union's message to Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah of Kuwait on March 21st, 1979, assuring him of continued Kremlin support for "the just struggle of the Arab people to regain their legitimate rights".²²⁷

Of greater significance, however, have been the Soviet diplomatic initiatives towards Riyadh, prompted by Saudi disillusionment with the American handling of the Arab-Israeli conflict and events in Iran. Brezhnev was reported to have sent two messages to King Khalid in December 1978, one regarding the Soviet position with respect to Camp David, the other expressing an interest in purchasing Saudi oil, and informal talks between the two states are believed to have taken place towards the end of 1978.²²⁸ Such reports gained much credibility when the influential Soviet weekly, Literaturnaya Gazeta, referred positively to Saudi Arabia's contribution to Arab politics.²²⁹

Similarly, in an interview with Al Hawadess at the beginning of March, 1979, the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Prince Saud al Faisal, indicated strongly that his country might be prepared to resume diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union after a lapse of 40 years.²³⁰ He referred to the positive policy adopted by the Soviet Union towards Arab issues and claimed that his country did not share American fears of expanding Soviet influence as a destabilising force in the Gulf.²³¹

Re-opening diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia would be a major coup for the Soviet Union, giving Moscow an opening in a region where it had previously encountered only hostility. Besides posing the possibility that the USSR could acquire oil on favourable terms, it would also indicate to the Muslim world that the most devoutly Islamic state was on friendly terms with the Soviet Union.

There is no disguising the fact that, as the opposition to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty gathers momentum, the Soviet Union has been presented with its greatest opportunity to exert influence in the Gulf since the 1973 War. However, while Soviet relations with Kuwait may progress, it remains unlikely that Saudi Arabia will turn its alliances around at such short notice. Rather it can be expected that Riyadh will put the Soviet

opening to good diplomatic advantage, as a method of applying pressure on the United States.

Setbacks for the Soviet Union

While the Soviet Union has undoubtedly achieved impressive gains in the Gulf as a result of recent events, its involvement in the region has not escaped setbacks.

The diplomatic disaster suffered by the Americans in Iran was clearly a major bonus to Soviet ambitions in the region, yet their joy could well be short-lived as it appears increasingly likely that they themselves could suffer a similar fate in Iraq. Clearly, Soviet interests in Iraq are threatened by the possibility of an "Iranian type" situation occurring but perhaps of greater concern to the USSR are signs that the current Iraqi regime is moving away from Moscow politically.

Despite the fifteen-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, Iraqi leaders have made it abundantly clear that they accept no tutelage by any foreign power, and it is no secret that relations between the two states have been strained since the 1975 Iraq-Iran rapprochement. However it was not until 1978, when Iraq and the Soviet Union found that their sympathies lay with opposite sides in the war in the Horn of Africa, that relations were visibly deteriorating. The execution of 21 Iraqi communists accused of subversion in May 1978, coinciding as it did with the Soviet-assisted April coup in Afghanistan and the allegedly Soviet-backed Kurdish uprising in June, was a clear indication of the Iraqi regime's concern with maintaining its autonomy and putting some distance between itself and the USSR.²³²

In order to limit Soviet influence in the region, the Iraqis have cooperated quietly with the conservative Saudis. Although it is commonly believed in the West that, as a result of the first Camp David meeting, Saudi Arabia moved closer to the radical Arab camp, Hirst has argued that, in reality, it was Iraq which moved closer to Saudi Arabia and to what the Soviet Union has termed the "reactionary Arab camp".²³³ Certainly Hirst's view is supported by the fact that the Saudis are understood to have won the crucial support of Iraq in resisting the demand, led by Syria and the PLO, for tougher reprisals to be taken against Egypt.²³⁴ Indeed it has been claimed that the Baghdad summit conference, ostensibly called to denounce the Camp David accords, was in effect a Saudi-Iraqi ploy to give support to Syria, so as to prevent the Damascus regime from becoming totally dependent on the Soviet Union.²³⁵

The new sense of cooperation between the two states, was reflected in a speech distributed by the Iraqi News Agency at the beginning of April, 1979, in which the Iraq Vice President, Saddam Hussein Takriti, said

"We must take up arms against any foreigner, regardless of his colour, who may violate (Arab) sovereignty. In this context we do not differentiate between a progressive, a Zionist, or a Frenchman. Nor do we differentiate between American and Soviet. Irrespective of the formal friendly ties it may have with some of us, the Soviet Union - and it is a friend of Iraq - cannot be allowed to occupy Saudi territory. This is because Saudi land is not outside the Arab map, and what applies to it applies to the rest of the Arab countries."²³⁶

This speech is the boldest hint Iraq has made in its campaign to promote itself as a stoutly anti-communist regime. The message is clearly intended for American as well as Saudi ears, coming as it does after many signs, such as moderation on oil prices, an eagerness to do business with American companies and, finally, the Iraqis' desire to re-establish relations with the United States, which have been broken since 1967.

It follows that, although the Soviet Union has proposed to make good Iraq's naval deficiencies through the delivery of 10 corvettes, any ambitions they may have had to gain leverage through promoting Iraq as a possible gendarme in the Gulf seem destined to failure, particularly as Iran has now announced it is to renew extensive naval activities in the area.²³⁷ Indeed it has been speculated that, once Iran has stabilised, a substantial agreement on Gulf security could be reached between Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the littoral states, which would be effective in keeping both superpowers out of the region.²³⁸

If a Gulf security pact were to materialise, it would be a major setback for the Soviet Union. Yet the most likely event to forestall it is a return to hostility in the relationship between Iran and Iraq, the consequences of which could be far-reaching for the Soviets. In June 1979 relations between Iran and Iraq reached their lowest in years, Iran having accused Iraq of smuggling arms to the Arab separatists in Khuzestan,²³⁹ and Baghdad in reply charging that the Iranian leadership was pursuing regional designs over the "Arabian Gulf".²⁴⁰ If this dispute should flare into open conflict not only would the Soviet Union be faced with the prospect of a war adjacent to its border but, also, it is conceivable that Iraq could invoke the mutual security arrangements implicit in Article 8 of the 1972 Treaty, and call for Soviet intervention. Given the significance of the Gulf region and assuming the United States were to honour its mutual defence alliance with Iran, it is possible that a direct confrontation between the two superpowers could result in which, ironically, neither had intervened on behalf of a totally-committed ally.

It is in the context of the growing deterioration of relations with Iran that the seemingly contradictory Iraqi moves of negotiating a naval arms accord with the Soviet Union (possibly leading to a Soviet naval base in Iraq), while at the same time courting the Saudis and Americans, should be viewed. These moves could be interpreted merely as gestures in Baghdad's quarrel with Tehran, designed to put pressure on the new regime in Iran and hence in this sense they are devoid of sincerity. However they also reflect the dilemma that Iraq now faces in its relations with both Iran and the Gulf as a whole, in seeking to preserve its progressive credentials while contemplating involvement in American-supported security arrangements directed against all forms of radicalism, Russian-influenced or otherwise.²⁴¹

Under such circumstances Baghdad would appear likely to become increasingly divorced from Moscow and its surrogates, the Arab-Israeli conflict being the only common ground between the two. Already this has become evident, following the breakdown in relations between Iraq and the PDRY, which led to the Iraqi decision, on 12 June 1979, to withdraw its ambassador from Aden.²⁴²

Of great concern to the Soviet Union is the fear that, if Baghdad does keep its distance from the Kremlin, an opportunity for the Chinese to regain influence in the Gulf, following their diplomatic setback in Iran, may be created. As part of their strategy¹⁶ to contain the USSR, the last few years have witnessed an unpublicised diplomatic push by Peking, concentrated in the Soviet "hunting ground" of the Red Sea and the Gulf. This has led to their forging diplomatic links with Djibouti, Oman and pre-revolutionary Iran, as well as establishing good contacts in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. At the same time, former Soviet allies such as Egypt and Somalia have now become friendly with the Chinese, and the Soviets must be aware of China's attempts to woo the PDRY.²⁴³

Direct Chinese influence in the Gulf remains limited yet, because Sino-Soviet rivalry is now reaching global proportions, Soviet gains in the Gulf are liable to provoke a Chinese reaction against Soviet interests elsewhere in the world, particularly in South East Asia. Hence China's intervention in Vietnam in March 1979, while ostensibly coming as a warning to the Soviet Union not to contemplate any further advances in South East Asia, conveniently coincided with the aftermath of the Iranian revolution and thus served to distract Soviet attention away from any aspirations they may have had in the area.

The Soviet leadership is also deeply worried about the possibility of a spill-over of Islamic revivalism into the Soviet Union. Already Soviet

Interests in Afghanistan are threatened by a Muslim insurrection which has the fervent support of a new Iranian regime dedicated to spreading the word of Islam. Should the pro-Moscow regime in Afghanistan collapse and be replaced by an Islamic republic, this would create a community of Muslim nations with a total population of 130 million in a broad belt across the Soviet Union's southern border.²⁴⁴

The Soviet Union itself is nominally the fifth largest Muslim state in the world, Muslims comprising almost twenty per cent of the Soviet population of 260 million. People of Muslim stock are concentrated in Soviet Central Asia, on the vast steppeland of Kazakhstan and in the Azerbaijan region. The proximity of these communities to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, would imply that there is a great risk of religious fervor being exported to the Soviet Union.

Soviet officials tend to minimize the danger of an Islamic explosion in the USSR however, arguing that the problems which made the Iranian revolution necessary were solved 60 years ago by the revolution in Russia. Nevertheless, the Soviet Muslims remain politically oppressed. Aware of the high birth rate (which if trends continue will mean the Muslim population will have doubled to 100 million by the year 2000), and the developing energy and natural resources in the southern republics of the Soviet Union, many young Soviet Muslims are now questioning their current position and in consequence are turning to Islam.²⁴⁵

The Shifting Geopolitical Momentum

The turmoil in Iran has also caused economic setbacks for the Soviet Union. As well as the loss of trade, there has also been a termination of supplies of natural gas to Soviet Transcaucasia which, although amounting to only about 3 per cent of the Soviet Union's total requirements, do serve a vital group of industrial plants. Furthermore, this also slashed Soviet deliveries of natural gas to East European partners and, in the midst of a hard winter, forced Soviet industry to divert precious energy to domestic heating.

In recent years the Soviet Union has restrained itself from intervening directly in the affairs of the Gulf states. In accordance with their view of history, they have been watching and waiting in the Rimland believing that time is on their side.

Meanwhile, American influence in the Middle East has declined because their attempts to make peace between Egypt and Israel coincided with a new Soviet assertiveness in the Rimland. Both of these things worried Saudi Arabia and other pro-Western states in the Gulf (which take their lead from the Saudis). However, instead of using Arab concern about Soviet designs in the region to

counteract their concern about Camp David (by a firm demonstration of American willingness to challenge Soviet activities), President Carter allowed the first to compound the second and the Americans suffered a major diplomatic setback.²⁴⁶

The upshot is a major change in the geopolitics of the region (Figure 6). Moving from a situation in 1970, where CENTO acted as a solid barrier to expansion in the Gulf, the non-Arab northern tier states have slid into civil disorder, Western alliances have collapsed and the Gulf has emerged as an area of great instability.

It is not necessary to believe in any Soviet "grand design" to see the benefit that these changes have brought to the Soviet Union. The arc in which some of the former neutrals have moved closer to Moscow and some of the former pro-West have become nervously neutral, is more important to the global balance of power than the gains the Soviets have made in Africa in the past three years. Furthermore, this has to some extent compensated for the one manifest defeat Soviet foreign policy suffered as a result of China's new alignment with the West.

The Soviet Union has benefited by its defence perimeter being pushed further south as a result of the build up of a bloc of non-aligned states between the Soviet border and the pro-American states to the west of the Red Sea (Figure 6). The only reliable allies that the United States have in the area are Israel, now faced by a united Arab front, and Oman, which is becoming increasingly isolated in the Arab world.

At the same time, strategically the Soviet Union has achieved an element of control over the southern entrance to the Red Sea, a role they could emulate in the Gulf, should the current Omani regime fall. Similarly, the Soviet goal of creating a corridor through Afghanistan and Pakistan to "home ports" on the Indian Ocean, is beginning to look distinctly possible. As a consequence the Soviet Union's ability to operate in the Indian Ocean and its environs, either for defensive purposes or to threaten the maritime lanes through which Gulf oil is transported to the West, has been enhanced. The significance of any leverage derived from this will increase in direct relation to the rapid growth of the Western world's dependence on Gulf oil and will become even more important to the Soviet Union when its own need for extensive imports of oil arises.

Nevertheless, the Soviet Union has only benefited from recent events in the vicinity of the Gulf in the negative sense that they are in line with one of the major objectives of Soviet foreign policy, namely the reduction of Western influence. Indeed, when Iraq's current predicament is taken into

consideration, the Soviet Union itself may actually be seen to have lost influence in the region. The magnitude of this and other setbacks which the USSR has recently encountered has given strength to the assertion that the Soviet Union is simply exploiting targets of opportunity in the Gulf as they present themselves, rather than pursuing a premeditated course of action.²⁴⁷

In the final analysis, any Soviet ambitions towards greater influence and access to oil in the Gulf could prove unrealistic, on account of the growing nationalism prevailing in the region. It is becoming increasingly clear that the states of the area are no longer willing to tolerate any form of outside intervention, seeing themselves emerging as a regional bloc under the unifying influence of Islam. Marxism is essentially incompatible with Islam and thus the best the USSR can hope for is that such a bloc should adopt an anti-Western stance. In this respect they argue that, unlike the West, there are (at least temporarily) no conflicting interests between the Soviet Union and the Arab oil producers. Moreover, should a new Arab-Israeli war break out, the United States, they assume, would again help Israel and the Arabs would again turn to the Soviet Union for aid. However, it must be in the forefront of the minds of the Soviet leadership that, should a permanent settlement between Israel and the Arab world materialise, the Soviet presence and influence in the Middle East would inevitably decline.

Clearly, the Iranian revolution and various diplomatic reversals have shown that both superpowers lie at the mercy of events in the Gulf and this, coupled with the political complexity and unreliability of Arab politics, has discouraged the Soviet Union from too great an involvement in the region. Soviet policy in the Gulf has thus been confined to reacting to American initiatives and in this respect the Soviet Union could be seen as sniping at the United States from the comparative safety of the Rimland.

However, with the demise of American influence, Soviet strategy appears to have reached a crossroads in the Gulf.²⁴⁸ Clearly, although the geopolitical momentum in the Gulf has turned in favour of the USSR, she can only progress so far before the West, China and the states of the Gulf impose penalties and risks which she is not willing to accept. At the same time, the erosion of Western power remains part of the Soviet grand design to destroy capitalism and in this respect, at least in the coming decade, the Gulf's oil will continue to function as a major factor in the global struggle for power. Consequently, the repercussions emanating from the success or failure of any Soviet initiatives in the Gulf are likely to become greatly amplified in the future.

POST-SCRIPT : AFGHANISTAN

One month after this study was completed, the November 1979 issue of the Soviet Report recorded an unprecedented level of direct Soviet military involvement in Afghanistan, suggesting that it was intended to stabilise the shaky Marxist government. By 5 January 1980, however, having met with fierce resistance from Islamic groups, this presence had grown to approximately 50,000 troops, making it by far the largest Soviet military undertaking on foreign soil outside the confines of its East European satellites.

Predictably alarmists have interpreted Soviet actions as part of a major thrust in the general direction of the Gulf, possibly towards the warm water port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea. However, to accept such an analysis is to ignore the long established Soviet influence in Afghanistan, which originated in the 1950s when the Soviet Union offered Afghanistan arms after the United States had rejected a similar request. Clearly, influence in Afghanistan accorded with Soviet security objectives and was particularly valuable at a time when the other northern tier states had pledged themselves to a pro-Western alliance through the Baghdad Pact (later CENTO). In April 1978, Afghanistan moved to become a direct client of Moscow, as a coup brought the Marxist regime under Taraki to power. Although reputedly organised by the Soviet Union, what is indisputable is that from this time the Russians emerged as the regime's only protector.

Consequently the 21 months of turbulent communist rule under Taraki posed a threat not only to Soviet influence but also to its southern border, a threat intensified following the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the stimulus it gave to Islamic awareness. Had Taraki fallen to a new Islamic regime, this would have created a community of Muslim nations with a total population of 130 million, in a broad belt across the Soviet Union's southern border. Should this community have followed Iran's example of moving in an undefined political direction, this would have created uncertainty along the Soviet border, besides the obvious danger of spreading an Islamic 'explosion' amongst the Soviet Union's own 50 million Muslim population. Worse still for the USSR was the prospect of Taraki falling to an anti-Soviet regime, which would have led to the presence of elements hostile to the Soviet Union along its border with Afghanistan. Consequently the Soviet Union felt compelled to move in and establish a new Marxist regime under Amin, justifying their action by declaring that its Asian neighbour was threatened by, 'American-financed counter-revolutionary gangs'.

Yet clearly, despite anxiety in the West, the Soviet strategy in Afghanistan has not met with success. The installation of a new regime under Karmal on 27 December 1979, the rapid build-up of Soviet troops, the appearance of General Ivan G. Pavlovsky (one of the Soviet Union's most senior military officers), and the growing Soviet military casualties, all bear witness to a deteriorating military situation. Having inserted huge numbers of troops in the country, the Russians may increasingly be tempted, or even forced, to look for a military rather than political solution, thus realising a 'Vietnam analogy'.

Of perhaps even greater significance to the Soviet Union has been the international reaction to Soviet moves. Widespread condemnation has served to unite the Islamic world, who openly voice support for the rebel Islamic groups in Afghanistan, to harden anti-Soviet rhetoric in the West, and to distract attention from the Tehran-Washington crisis over the US embassy hostages. The abortive American rescue attempt went some way towards reversing international attention away from Afghanistan but, with the widespread boycott of the Olympic games in Moscow, attention was once again be focused on the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Clearly the repercussions to the USSR of her occupation of Afghanistan have been embarrassing and have to a certain extent served to offer the Americans an opportunity to redeem the traditional suspicion of their motives in the region, stemming from the Arab-Israeli dispute and the Palestinian problem. Furthermore, events in Afghanistan run the risk of prompting Iran to re-establish its ties with the West and the conservative regimes of the Gulf to form a pro-Western alliance as a strategic counterweight to perceived Soviet intentions.

Thus, although Western strategists now view the volatile area of Baluchistan as the key to the Russians reaching the Gulf, it is highly unlikely that the Soviet Union would at present desire to be sucked into another conflict on her southern border, especially one which would trigger not only a direct Islamic reaction, but also a possible American one.

In part, it would appear that Western reaction to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan has been conditioned by the collapse of the Shah's regime, an event which was bound to amplify the international repercussions of any Soviet initiatives in the Rimland in view of reduced Western influence. Soviet-inspired events, such as the combined Cuban and Ethiopian offensive in the 1978 Horn of Africa conflict and the fall of Rubai Ali's regime in the PDRY in June 1978, though not of the same magnitude as the Afghanistan situation, nevertheless involved equally or more strategically vital areas

to the West, and yet none provoked a level of reaction on an equivalent scale. Ironically, a Western protest expressing itself in the form of trade sanctions could involve the Soviet Union even further in the affairs of the Gulf if it involved the trading of oil technology, since the Russians would increasingly require the oil of the Gulf as they would be hindered in the development of their own resources. Likewise, trade sanctions against Iran can only lead that country towards greater trade relations with the Soviet Union.

Hence Soviet strategy in Afghanistan would appear to be one of recon-
solidation in the Rimland, rather than expansion in the direction of the Gulf. Yet, while the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan has not significantly altered the balance of power in the Gulf, it has demonstrated the importance the Soviet Union attaches to its allegiances in the area, - a commitment which in this case stems not only from Afghanistan's proximity to its own strategic space, but also from that country's religious links with the Gulf.

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APPENDIX 1. SOVIET ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN THE GULF

Table 1: SOVIET ECONOMIC AID DELIVERED TO LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND TO THE MIDDLE EAST, 1955-75.

Countries or groups of countries	1955-66	1967-70	1971-75	1971-73	1974-75
Total (million roubles)	1,488.9	1,213.9	1863.5	1067.8	795.7
Per cent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Middle East & North Africa	36.1	62.0	75.4	74.9	76.0
North Africa	1.0	5.3	6.6	5.8	7.7
Red Sea countries	2.8	1.6	1.5	1.1	2.1
Oil countries	7.2	27.2	36.6	28.5	47.6
Gulf countries	9.4	24.6	32.4	25.1	42.2
Iran	0.3	21.9	22.2	16.8	29.4
Iraq	6.3	1.1	8.7	7.2	10.7
Egypt	23.6	20.9	16.0	16.5	15.3

Source: Ro'i, Y. *The Limits to Power: Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, London: Croom Helm, 1979, 79.

Table 2: SOVIET MILITARY AID TO LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND TO THE MIDDLE EAST, 1955-75.

	C.I.A. Estimates			A.C.D.A. Estimates		
	1955-66	1967-70	1971-74	1961-66	1967-70	1971-74
Total (\$US million)	4,505	2,300	5,205	2,875	2,318	5,191
Per cent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Middle East & North Africa	55.4	75.9	86.8	48.3	77.0	81.2
North Africa	3.4	6.7	1.7	6.8	3.4	5.4
Red Sea countries	1.1	5.3	3.3	3.8	3.8	2.9
Oil countries	13.1	21.5	33.0	17.6	21.0	27.7
Gulf countries	11.1	20.1	35.2	14.9	21.4	25.2
Iran	-	7.2	13.2	-	5.2	9.0
Iraq	10.0	7.6	18.7	11.1	12.4	13.3
Egypt	32.3	43.9	18.9	22.6	44.0	23.9

Source: Ro'i, Y. *The Limits to Power: Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, London: Croom Helm, 1979, 74-75.

Table 3: SOVIET TRADE VOLUME WITH LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCs) AND WITH THE MIDDLE EAST, 1954-75.

Countries and groups of countries	1954-66	1967-70	1971-73	1974-75
Soviet trade with LDCs as % of total	9.9	12.3	13.7	13.4
Total Trade with LDCs (million roubles)	10,945	7,329	7,944	9,133
% of total Soviet trade with LDCs	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Middle East & North Africa	37.2	55.0	58.6	34.0
North Africa	2.3	7.5	8.0	7.3
Red Sea countries	2.1	2.7	1.8	1.1
Oil countries	7.8	17.1	23.1	27.6
Gulf countries	8.8	14.2	18.6	23.6
Iran	4.3	8.5	9.4	11.0
Iraq	2.4	2.9	7.4	11.4
Egypt	20.1	23.7	21.4	15.8

Source: Ro'i, Y. The Limits to Power: Soviet Policy in the Middle East, London: Croom Helm, 1979, 84

Table 4: SOVIET TRADE WITH THE GULF, 1973-77 (million roubles)

Country	IMPORTS		EXPORTS	
	1977	1973	1977	1973
Gulf States	-	-	3.5	-
Iraq	321.0	190.6	281.0	141.5
Iran	283.4	139.6	424.1	137.3
Kuwait	2.5	-	21.5	7.9
Saudi Arabia	-	-	14.1	2.9
Middle East Total	1,533.7	846.1	1,555.5	920.0
\$U.S. million equivalent	2,124.2	1,195.7	2,154.4	1,300.0
Middle East as % of world	5.1	5.4	4.7	5.8

Source: Middle East Economic Digest, 27 October, 1978, 48

APPENDIX 2 SOVIET OIL STATISTICS

Note: Up to and including 1976, the Soviet Union published statistics of both the volume and the value of her trade in oil and gas but from 1977, amid increasing Soviet restrictions on the availability of information on Soviet foreign trade, only value figures for oil trade transactions were released. These statistics, (\$ equivalent of roubles), have made the valuation of volumes a matter of conjecture; consequently no post-1976 import and export volumes have been included in tables 5 and 7 unless otherwise quoted.

Non-available figures are denoted by the abbreviation n.a. throughout.

Table 5: SOURCES AND USES OF SOVIET PETROLEUM, 1970-78

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
<u>SOURCES</u>									
Domestic Production (mill tonnes)	353.0	377.1	400.4	429	452	491	521	540 ^a	572 ^a
Annual growth rate (%)	-	6.8	6.2	7.1	5.4	8.6	6.1	3.6 ^a	5.9 ^a
Imports (mill tonnes)	4.6	6.5	9.1	14.7	5.4	7.6	7.2	n.a.	n.a.
Annual growth rate (%)	n.a.	41	40	62	-63	40	-5	n.a.	n.a.
<u>USES</u>									
Apparent consumption (mill tonnes)	261.8	278.6	302.5	325.4	341.2	368.3	379.5	395.0 ^a	412.8 ^a
Exports (mill tonnes)	95.8	105.1	107.0	118.3	116.2	130.3	148.5	n.a.	n.a.
Annual growth rate (%)	-	9.7	1.8	10.6	-1.8	12.1	14.0	n.a.	n.a.
Net Export (mill tonnes)	91.2	98.6	97.9	103.6	110.8	122.7	141.3	n.a.	n.a.
<u>Sources:</u> Spechler, D.R. & Spechler, M.C. "The Soviet Union and the Oil Weapon" in Ro'i, Y. (ed.) <u>The Limits to Power</u> , London: Groom Helm, 1979, 99-101 Figures marked a are from the <u>B.P. Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry</u> , 1978, 18 and 20.									

Table 6: DEPENDENCE OF NATIONS UPON OIL FROM THE GULF, 1978

Country or Continent	A % of nation's total energy obtained from oil	B % of nation's oil imported from Gulf	C Gulf sensitivity (A x B) (10 ⁴)
U.S.A.	46.68	12.79	5.97
Canada	39.88	15.64	6.24
Latin America	65.84	36.82	24.24
Western Europe	57.66	60.06	34.63
Africa	46.45	35.14	16.32
Japan	72.24	75.43	54.49
South-East Asia	63.57	75.36	47.91
Australia	50.53	32.08	16.21
U.S.S.R.	37.56	1.52	0.57
Sources: B.P. Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1978; Oil and Gas Journal, 23 April 1979, 38			

Table 7: VOLUME OF SOVIET CRUDE OIL IMPORTS BY SUPPLIER COUNTRY, 1968-78
(million tonnes)

	Algeria	Egypt	Iraq	Libya	Syria	Saudi Arabia	World Total
1978	n.a.	n.a.	6.27 ^b	1.47 ^c	0.6	-	n.a.
1977	-	n.a.	4.6 ^a	1.02 ^c	0.7	-	n.a.
1976	-	0.2	5.8	-	0.5	-	7.2
1975	1.0	0.2	5.3	-	-	-	7.6
1974	-	0.2	3.9	-	0.3	-	5.4
1973	-	0.2	11.0	1.7	0.2	-	14.7
1972	0.6	1.0	4.1	1.9	0.3	-	9.1
1971	0.7	2.0	-	-	-	-	6.5
1970	0.5	2.0	-	-	-	-	4.6
1969	0.5	0.9	-	-	-	0.02	2.5
1968	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	0.9

Sources: Petro Studies Co. Soviet Oil, Gas and Energy Databook, Noroil Publishing, 1978, 168; Spechler, D.R. and Spechler, M.R. "The Soviet Union and the Oil Weapon", in Ro'i, Y. The Limits to Power, London: Croom Helm, 1979, 99; (a) The Petroleum Economist, July 1978, 308; (b) Oil and Gas Journal, 23 April, 1979, 38; (c) Author's estimate

APPENDIX 3. STATISTICS ON SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITY

Table 8: TOTAL ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE MIDDLE EAST BY MAJOR SUPPLIERS, 1967-76
(current \$U.S. million)

Recipient	Total	USSR	USA	FRANCE	UK	OTHERS
World Total	79,070	22,053	38,257	3,819	2,832	12,109
Total Near East	20,553	6,982	9,836	761	970	2,004
Bahrain	1	-	-	-	-	1
Cyprus	1	-	-	-	-	1
Egypt	2,801	2,365	1	125	15	300
Iran	5,271	611	3,835	15	270	542
Iraq	2,451	1,795	-	95	5	555
Israel	4,941	-	4,761	105	35	40
Jordan	650	-	505	55	60	31
Kuwait	181	-	31	-	71	81
Lebanon	131	5	25	75	5	20
Oman	71	-	5	-	21	45
Qatar	5	-	-	-	5	-
Saudi Arabia	1,440	-	671	225	451	91
Syria	2,261	2,015	5	5	3	232
UAE	105	-	-	50	31	25
PDRY	165	151	-	-	1	11
YAR	80	35	1	11	1	20

Source: U.S. Arms control and Disarmament Agency Pub No. 98 World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1967-76, Washington D.C., 1978, 158

Table 9: SOVIET MILITARY DELIVERIES TO THE THIRD WORLD (\$U.S. million)

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Africa	55	75	235	600	1,070
Latin America	0	10	25	55	80
Middle East	970	2,655	1,785	850	830
South-East Asia	180	270	205	180	210
TOTAL	1,205	3,010	2,250	1,685	2,190
Middle East as % of Total	80	88	79	50	38

Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Centre, Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1976, Washington D.C.: C.I.A., November 1977, 3.

Table 10: STRENGTH OF GROUND FORCES (As of 1 January 1979)

	Personnel	Divisions			Brigade /Reg't		Battalion	Tanks
		Arm'd	A'borne	Other	Arm'd	Other		
Bahrain	2,300	-	-	-	-	-	1½	-
Iran	285,000	3	-	3	1	3	-	1,870
Iraq	180,000	4	-	6	1	3	-	1,900
Kuwait	10,500	-	-	-	1	2	-	150
Oman	14,000	-	-	-	-	-	9½	-
Saudi Arabia	35,000	-	-	-	1	4	3	325
UAE	27,000	-	-	-	-	1	10	36
YAR	36,000	-	-	2	2	3	-	220
PDRY	19,000	-	-	-	-	10	2	260
<u>Intervention Forces</u>								
Soviet Union		-	2					
United States		-	1	1				

Source: The Institute for the study of Conflict, 'The Security of Middle East Oil', London: I.S.C., May 1979, 32.

Table 11: STRENGTH OF NAVAL FORCES (As of 1 January 1979)

	Personnel	Destroyers, Frigates, Corvettes	Guided missile boats	Others
Bahrain	-	-	-	20
Iran	28,000	11	6	26
Iraq	4,000	-	12	29
Kuwait	500	-	-	36
Oman	900	-	7	10
Saudi Arabia	1,500	-	-	10
UAE	600	-	-	15
YAR	500	-	-	8
PDRY	600	-	-	14
<u>Intervention Forces</u>				
Soviet Union	About eight ships at any one time			
United States		2		1 Command Ship
<u>Source:</u> The Institute for the Study of Conflict, <u>The Security of Middle East Oil</u> , London: I.S.C., May 1979, 33				

Table 12: STRENGTH OF AIR FORCES (As of 1 January, 1979)

	Personnel	Aircraft
Bahrain	-	-
Iran	100,000	439
Iraq	28,000	339
Kuwait	1,200	49
Oman	2,100	32
Saudi Arabia	12,000	157
UAE	1,800	46
YAR	1,500	26
PDRY	1,300	34
<u>Intervention Forces</u>		
Soviet Union	2 Tactical Air Armies, each of 250 aircraft	
United States	Tactical Air Command, 43 Fighter Squadrons	
<u>Source:</u> The Institute for the Study of Conflict, <u>The Security of Middle East Oil</u> , London: I.S.C., May 1979, 33.		

Table 13: COMMUNIST MILITARY TECHNICIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 1977

Area	Total	USSR and Eastern Europe	Cuba
World	32,100	10,250	21,850
Middle East	4,380	3,880	500
Iraq	1,300	1,150	150
YAR	100	100	0
PDRY	700	350	350
Syria	2,175	2,175	0
Others	105	105	0
Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Centre, Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, Washington D.C.: C.I.A. November 1978, 3.			

Table 14: MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM THE MIDDLE EAST TRAINED IN THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE, 1956-77

Area	Total	USSR	Eastern Europe
World	46,975	41,875	5,100
Middle East	17,050	15,225	1,825
Iran	325	325	0
Iraq	4,075	3,550	525
YAR	1,175	1,175	0
PDRY	975	850	25
Syria	4,350	3,650	700
Egypt	6,250	5,675	575
Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Centre, Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, Washington D.C.: C.I.A., November 1978, 3.			

Table 15: U.S. AND SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THE GULF 1945-79

	1945-54		1955-64		1965-72		1973-79	
	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR
Facilities	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	?
Permanent Forces	X	-	X	-	X	-	X	?
Arms Transfers	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X
Training	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X
Exercises	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X
Visits	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X

NOTES

NOTES

Introduction

1. Time (New York), 15 Jan. 1979, quoting Zbigniew Brzezinski, U.S. National Security Adviser.
2. The Economist (London), 9 Dec. 1978
3. ISC 1979
4. Kolkowicz, R. "The Soviet Policy in the Middle East" in Confino, H. and Shamir, S., 1973, 80
5. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 64

Chapter One

6. Burrell, R.M. "The Persian Gulf and the Western Ocean" in Henderson, W., 1973, 11
7. Jukes, G., 1972
8. Summarised in R. Moss "Soviet Plan for the Indian Ocean", Daily Telegraph (London), 9 July 1979
9. McLaurin, R.D. "The Soviet Policy in the Persian Gulf" in Mughisuddin, M., 1977, 117
10. Ibid
11. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 25
12. McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 5
13. McLaurin, R.D. and Price, J.M., 1976, 10
14. Burrell, R.M. op cit, 1973, 11
15. Jukes, G., "Soviet Policy in the Indian Ocean" in McGwire, M., Booth, K. and McDonnell, J., 1975
16. See Page, S., 1971, 13-24; diplomatic relations were established with the Hejaz in 1924 and with the Yemen in 1928 in the hope of breaking the British sphere of influence in the Red Sea.
17. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 36
18. Pranger, R.J. and Tahtinen, D.R., 1979, 7
19. Middle East Journal 24, 1970, 302-8
20. R.D. McLaurin op cit, 1977, 119
21. Tomlin, Y. "The Indian Ocean in the Aggressive Plans of Imperialism" (Mirovaya ekonomika : Mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya (Moscow) 8, 27, 1971 as quoted in Berson et al, 1976, 17
22. Ro'i, Y. 1979, Ch 3 "Economic Aspects of Soviet Involvement"
23. USCIA, 1978b, 6
24. Figures derived from "Soviet Trade with the Middle East, 1973-77" MEED, 27 Oct. 1978
25. R.D. McLaurin op cit, 1977, 123
26. See Halliday, F., 1974 for details of the 1976 trade agreement with Iran.
27. Petroleum Economist (London) July 1978, 308
28. Petro Studies Co., 1978, 168

29. Campbell, J.C., 1978, 3
30. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 24-27
31. Ibid, 127
32. Lacquer, W.Z. "Soviet Dilemmas in the Middle East" in Confino, M. and Shamir, S., 1973, 90
33. See Agwani, M.S., 1978, 135, who stresses that, despite the Soviet support given to anti-Western Arab factions, Khrushchev had a strong aversion to the pan-Arab idea, fearing it would be a barrier to communism. See also R.D. McLaurin, *op.cit.*, 1975, Ch.2.
34. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 37. The Buraimi Oasis dispute brought Saudi Arabia closer to Egypt, leading to a defence treaty and, when the Egyptians concluded their 1955 arms deal with Czechoslovakia, arms were also offered to Saudi Arabia. However, Yodfat and Abir conclude that King Saud used the possibility merely as a warning to the West.
35. Agwani, M.S., 1978, 133-134, suggests that the USSR, having burnt its fingers in the mid-1940s in Iran, adopted a low profile in the political upheavals of the 1950s, leading to the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the meteoric rise and fall of Mossadeq.
36. Ibid, 137. Moscow's grave miscalculations about the nature and magnitude of the Israeli military threat to Syria, compounded by its encouragement to Nasser to move his armies into the Sinai Desert, precipitated a war in which its principal clients in the region not only suffered a shattering defeat, but also lost sizeable chunks of territory to Israel.
37. "Soviet thoughts on the new regime in Iraq", *Mizan* (London), September/October, (1968)
38. Lacquer, W.Z. *op.cit.*, 1973, 98. The process of disenchantment began around 1965. It is usually explained with reference to the overthrow of Sukarno (Indonesia), Ben Bella (Algeria), Qassem (Iraq), and Nkrumah (Ghana), all of whom disappeared in a short time without a struggle.
39. Author's note: Yet at the same time the conflict with China, the growing regional awareness of CMEA members, such as Czechoslovakia, (culminating in the 1968 Soviet invasion) and Albania's move towards China, must have illustrated to Soviet leaders that even "Marxist ties" were susceptible to deterioration.
40. Freedman, R.O., 1975, 62. In September 1971 the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation invited a delegation from the PFLOAG to Moscow for the first time. One month later a similar invitation was extended to Arafat of the PLO.
41. Abir, M., 1974, 88
42. Gupta, B.S. "General discussion" in Amirie, A., 1975, 70 suggested that the superpowers have an unwritten set of ground rules with respect to conflicts throughout the Third World, to ensure that they do not escalate.
43. Wright, D., 1973, 258. When Baghdad raised the question of Iran's occupation of Abu Musa and the Tunbs in the security council of the U.N., the Russians were represented at that meeting by a "relatively junior official, who was at pains to sit on the fence."

44. Campbell, J.C. "The Superpowers in the Persian Gulf Region" in Amittie, A. 1975, 53 and No. 1, Y., 1974, 565-569

45. Yodfat, A. and Abit, M. op cit. 1977, 89-90

46. Ibid, 53. In a speech in Cairo in May, 1964, Khrushchev said,

"Kuwait! There is some little ruler sitting there, an Arab of course, a Muslim. He is given bribes, he lives the life of the rich, but he trades in the riches of his people. He had never had any conscience and he will not ever have one."

47. Monroe, E.R., 1973 highlighted the idea that Gulf rulers might be taking out an insurance policy against subversion, by creating a radical image through inviting the USSR to establish an embassy. The Kurds demanded that the oil-rich Kirkuk region be included in a Kurdish autonomous zone. However the Soviets wanted Iraq to control this area, since the Kurdish leadership had turned anti-Soviet and might have terminated oil exports to the USSR, were it able to incorporate Kirkuk into Kurdistan.

49. Lateef, A., 1976

50. Holley, C. 1978

51. Smolansky, O.M. "Soviet Entry into the Indian Ocean: An Analysis, in McGwire, M., 1973, 419, argues this point.

52. Halliday, F. 1974, 259, states that "Russian policy towards Iran highlights what, from a socialist perspective, is probably the most significant criticism of the Soviet Union's foreign policy, namely, its extreme timidity."

Chapter Two

53. Klinghoffer, A.J. 1977

54. ISC May 1979, 9

55. Campbell, K.C. in Amittie, A. 1975, 48

56. The British Petroleum Co. Ltd. 1978, 10

57. Yodfat, A. and Abit, M. 1977, 11. The pipeline was completed in October 1970

58. See Klinghoffer, A.J., 1977, 129, who refers to the pipeline exporting only Arab oil, and Yodfat, A. and Abit, M., op.cit., 1977, 12, who state that it would export Arab and Iranian oil

59. Klinghoffer, A.J., 1977, 128.

60. Pravda (Moscow) 26 Dec. 1967, quoted in Yodfat, A. and Abit, M. 1977, 12, and Mizen, 10(3) May/June 1968, 78-89

61. Yodfat, A. and Abit, M. 1977, 13

62. MEED 17(9) 2 Mar 1972, 23-26

63. Yodfat, A. and Abit, M. 1977 3

64. See McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 37, who states that the Soviet Union's attention was not initially directed towards OPEC, but rather to the Jidda Conference that had taken place in 1959, and had established the need and support for revisions in the concession areas and terms, among other issues.

65. Petro-Studies Co. 1978, 168

66. Field, M. "Oil in the Middle East and North Africa", in The Middle East and North Africa, 1978/79, Europa Publications, 91-92
67. Smolansky, O., "Soviet Policy in the Persian Gulf", in McGwire, M., Booth, K. and McDonnell, J., 1975, 278-286
68. International Affairs (Moscow), November 1973, 58, as quoted in Spechler, D.R. and Spechler, M.C., "The Soviet Union and the Oil Weapon" in Ro'i, Y. 1979, 104
69. See Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1979, 104, who gave the illustration of the Washington Energy Conference of February 11th, 1974, which was criticised by the Soviet media, who stressed the lack of unity between the advanced capitalist states, particularly the French dissension.
70. Author's note: The Bucharest Principle is a rolling 5-year pricing formula which, in taking the price of Soviet oil to Eastern Europe as the average over the past 5 years, was designed to raise prices gradually to world levels.
71. Gardner, F., 1974, 51
72. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M. 1977, 19, state that, according to the US Customs Records, since the beginning of 1973, four tankers loaded with Soviet petroleum products docked in New York and New Jersey ports. The Soviets were said to have fulfilled all their contractual obligations
73. Goldman, M. 1975, 91. He further states that \$76 million of oil exports during 1973 were unaccounted for in the yearly breakdown of oil trade figures published in Veshnyaya Torgovliya. (Goldman's was one of the references Klinghoffer could not verify, see note 58)
74. Russell, J. 1974, 199-200
75. Field, M., op.cit. 92
76. Agwani, M.S., 1978, 46 claims the embargo was lifted in the wake of hints emanating from Washington that the USA might occupy Abu Dhabi, should the embargo continue
77. Moscow Radio Broadcast, "Peace and Progress", on 7 March 1974 -

"if some Arab leaders are today ready to surrender in the face of American pressure to lift the ban before (Arab) demands are met, they are taking the risk of challenging the entire Arab world and all the world's progressive forces."
78. Spechler, D.R. and Spechler, M.C., in Ro'i, 1979, 116
79. ICS 1979, 10
80. The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1978, 18 and 20
81. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 8.
82. The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1978, 4
83. Gumbel, W., "The Energy Policy of the USSR", in Gasteyger, C., 1974, states that the Soviets also face problems over great wastage with as much as 37% of all oil and gas being lost at the production stage.
84. ICS, 1979, 10
85. The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1978, 4.
86. New Times (Moscow) No. 48, November 1973, 22

87. Albinowski, S., in Polityka (Poland), September 24, 1976 as quoted in Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 6-7
88. Rachkov, B., 1969, 36-7
89. Berry, J.A., 1972, 153
90. Summarised in OPEC Bulletin, "The USSR faces Declining Production", 14 May 1979, 19-21, and The Daily Telegraph (London), 31 July, 1979
91. US Central Intelligence Agency, The International Energy Situation: Outlook to 1985, A Special Report, (April 1977) Also summarised in Platt's Oilgram News, "CIA report forecast: Russian oil production slows down by the 1980s", 20th May (1977) 14-15
92. The New York Times (New York), 16 April (1977) 9-11 considered that, in the light of the USSR and CMEA together recording a surplus of 43.5 million tonnes in 1975,

"CIA predictions of a net bloc deficit in 1985 resting on unsubstantiated forecasts of a violent fall of Soviet production in the early 1980s, must be viewed with suspicion".
93. Summarised in the Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, 16(11) 14 Mar 1977.
94. Electric Power Institute, The Outlook for World Oil into the 21st Century, California: The Petroleum Industry Research Foundation 1978, as summarised in the Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, 17,(24), June 12th (1978)
95. As summarised in the Arab Economist, "Arab Oil for the USSR in the Nineties", August (1978) 36-7 and Rahmer, B.A., "Export Potential in Decline", Petroleum Economist, June 1978 246-7
96. Summarised in Events, "Russians Prepare the Way for Expanding Oil Trade", October 6 1978, 37. See also footnote 83
97. An International Energy Agency estimate, as quoted by Rodgers, P. "The Naked Pipeline", Penthouse, 14, No. 5, 1979, 112
98. See Events, "Eastern Europe starts to look to OPEC for Oil", July 29th 1977 43
99. Russell, J., 1974, concludes that in the same way the rapid oil price rises of 1973 meant that East European states in 1974 found it impossible to import 1973 volumes at 1974 prices, so Soviet efforts continually to raise oil prices will force its East European allies increasingly to turn to them for supplies.
100. The Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, 17, (26) June 26 1978
101. Events, "Russians Prepare the Way for Expanding Oil Trade", op.cit.
 Under the new agreement of September 1978, Spain will import from the USSR much of the oil it has until recently been receiving from Venezuela, while Cuba will import from Venezuela the oil that previously went to Spain.
102. Ibid.
103. Petroleum Economist, July 1978, 308
104. Oil and Gas Journal, 23 April 1979
105. Ibid.
106. Oil and Gas Journal, 30 July 1978, 119

107. US Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Centre, Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, Washington D.C. : Central Intelligence Agency (November 1978), 32
 108. Ibid.
 109. Ibid, 31
 110. Events, "Grim future Predicted if Russia's Oil runs out", September 9th 1977, 38.
 111. Berry, R.D., 1972
 112. McLaurin, R.D., op.cit. 38.
 113. This distinction has also been made by Berry, J.A., op.cit., and Hunter, R.E. The Soviet Dilemma in the Middle East, part II, Oil and the Persian Gulf, Adelphi Paper No. 60, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, (October 1969)
 114. Campbell, R.C., 1975, 50
- Chapter Three
115. The 1976 Alistair Buchan Memorial Lecture, Survival, London, September/October 1976, 196-7
 116. McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 97, Lexington Mass: Heath, D.C. (1975), 97
 117. Ro'i, Y. 1979, 139 concludes, however, that the impact of arms deliveries on national armies is now marginal and unpredictable
 118. Benton, G., "The Middle East Armoury", in Middle East Yearbook 1979
 119. Smolansky, O.M., "Soviet Entry into the Indian Ocean: An Analysis", in McGwire, M. 1973
 120. US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1977, 158.
 121. In the period 1971-74, Iraq, Syria and Egypt received 63.9 per cent of Soviet military aid delivered to less-developed countries according to US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency estimates quoted in Table 2 Appendix 1.
 122. SIPRI 1979
 123. Mangold, P., 1978, 93
 124. Yodfat, A. and Abir, M., 1977, 57
 125. Ro'i, Y. 1979, 46
 126. Lenczowski, G., 1971, 61
 127. McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 104
 128. Smolansky, O.M., op.cit.
 129. Sampson, A. 1977, 290, writing from the United States angle, claims that the arms race in the Middle East was not initiated by any perceived threat from the East, but by the commercial opportunities coinciding with the diplomacy of the Guam/Nixon Doctrine and the British retreat from the Gulf, which resulted in a general loss of control by the Pentagon over the arms companies
 130. Halliday, F. 1979, 93-4
 131. Military Aviation News October 1975, 15
 132. Pajak, R.F., 1976
 133. Ibid.

134. Kemp, G., "Military Build-up : Arms Control or Arms Trade" in Adelphi Paper No. 114, I.I.I.S. 1975
135. Pajak, R.F. 1976
136. Kemp, G. op.cit.
137. Middle East Economic Digest, 10 October 1975 specified two problems facing Middle Eastern states in initiating military import substitution projects, these being a lack of skilled manpower and the absence of the infrastructure required for the design, development and production of technotronic weaponry.
138. McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 108
139. Stanley, J. and Pearton, M., 1972. refer to USSR credit terms for arms as being of 2-2½ per cent interest repayable over 10-12 years (prior to 1972)
140. Ro'i, Y. 1979, 78
141. The Secretary-General of the Iraqi National Progressive Front, Naim Haddad, said at a press conference in Bonn, in August 1974, that Iraq had paid in cash, in its own currency, for all the weapons received from the Soviet Union. Arab Report and Record, No. 16, 16-31 August 1974
142. Events 17 Dec 1976, 29
143. SIPRI 1979
144. It was also reported that, on 17 September 1976, less than one month after the Iraq-Soviet Union arms accord was signed, an Iraqi military force (size unknown) had crossed the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border and had established a "base" some two or three miles inside Kuwaiti territory. Arab Report and Record, No. 14, 16-31 July 1977 and American University, Area Handbook for the Persian Gulf states, Washington D.C.: American University 1977, 185
145. Events, 17 Dec. 1976, 29
146. SIPRI 1979
147. I.I.I.S. Strategic Balance 1975, 86, claims that the Soviets temporarily halted arms deliveries to Iraq in 1964 over differences concerning the Kurds and in 1967 following the defection of an Iraqi-piloted MiG-21 to Israel and the increasing tension over the Kurds. It was also claimed by the Boston Globe 10 July, 1975, that the Soviet Union had withheld arms supplies to Iraq in mid 1975, as they were displeased by Iraqi attempts to build support among Gulf states for the exclusion of Soviet and American forces in the Gulf.
148. Events, 1 October, 1976, 36.
149. Mishlawi, T., 1979, 20
150. Ibid
151. Golan, G. The Prospect of Soviet Power in the 1980s, Part II, Soviet Power and Policies in the Third World, Adelphi Paper No. 152, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Summer 1979
152. Mangold, P. 1978, 93.
153. McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 114

154. The Financial Times (London), 11 September 1974, reported that radio messages between Soviet pilots on bombing operations in Kurdistan had been intercepted and one of two Iraqi pilots captured in August after being shot down, had admitted to direct Soviet involvement. A report in The Times (London) 16 October 1974, suggested that the Russians were looking for an outlet to the Gulf and a remote testing ground for the Tu-22 aircraft, but a more likely explanation is that the missions served a political purpose in showing support to the Iraqi regime in their guerilla war with the Kurds.
155. Lines, T., 1978, 31-2.
156. Halliday, F. 1974, 98.
157. As quoted by Sampson, A., 1977, 291
158. USCIA Nov. 1978, 3-4
159. Mangold, P. 1978, 45
160. See Moss, R., "Soviet Plan for Indian Ocean", Daily Telegraph (London) 9 July 1979
161. McLaurin, R.D., "Soviet Policy in the Persian Gulf", in Mughisuddin, M. 1977, 133
162. Whetton, L. in Amirie, A. 1975, 97
163. International Herald Tribune (Paris) 12 February 1975
164. Whetton, L., op.cit. 1975
165. Kayhan International (Tehran), 20 October 1976
166. Ibid
167. Jukes, G. in McGwire et al 1975, 310
168. McLaurin, R.D., in Mughisuddin, M. 1977, 134
169. Moore, J.E. 1975, 36
170. One Soviet naval visit was however made to Bahrain in July 1971, according to McGwire, M., 1973, 411
171. Fielden, D., 1976, quoting from Cottrell and Hahn, Indian Ocean Naval Limitations - Regional Issues and global implications, New York: National Strategy Information Centre 1976
172. Smolansky, O.M., in McGwire, M. et al 1975, 310
173. McConnell, J.M. "The Soviet Navy in the Indian Ocean", in McGwire, M. 1973, 391. states that the interdiction of the flow from the Gulf is a job for submarines and not surface ships which comprise the bulk of the Soviet Indian Ocean contingent.
174. See Jukes, G., "The Indian Ocean in Soviet Naval Policy", Adelphi Paper No. 87, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies 1972
175. Evans, R. and Novak, R., International Herald Tribune, 29 July 1976, quoting from a new book by Admiral Sergei Gorchkov
176. McConnell, J.M., op.cit. 396
177. Cottrell, A.J. and Burrell, R.M. 1975. interpreted the visit as a warning vis-a-vis the Iranians.
178. Kelly, A.M. 1974
179. Mangold, P., 1978, 94

180. Kelly, A.M. and Petersen, C., 1976, and the International Herald Tribune 19-20 July 1975
181. Mangold, P. 1978, 94
182. See Chubin, S. and Zabih, S., 1975, p.84 concerning Soviet troop movements along the Iranian border during 1971, and Burrell, R.M. and Cottrell, A.J. 1974, 12 on the movements in 1974
183. Arab Report and Record, No. 1, 1-15 January 1975
184. See Ramazani, R.K., 1979, 828
185. Mangold, P. 1978, 88
186. Ibid
187. Campbell, J.C., in Amirie, A. 1975, 57
188. Yodfat, A., and Abir, M. 1977, 129
189. McLaurin, R.D., 1975, 118
190. ISC May 1979, 32-3
191. Ibid
192. Daily Telegraph (London), 30 July 1979, In return for the development of a base, the Iraqi Navy would receive 10 Nanuchka class 950-ton corvettes.
193. Wettern, D., "US may station carrier force at Diego Garcia", Daily Telegraph, 15 August 1979.
194. McConnell, J.M., op.cit. 406

Chapter Four

195. The Economist "When the policeman's gone", (London), 27 Jan 1979, 13-14
196. See The Middle East, "Forum on Gulf Security", November 1977 64-67
197. Halliday, F., 1979, 272, states that pre-revolutionary Iran pursued counter revolutionary activities outside the confines of the Gulf; in South Vietnam (1972), Zaire (1977) and Ethiopia (1977). Clearly the scale of Tehran's policy, in going far beyond its own security horizons, suggests that it was primarily designed to serve American interests and in this context, the Shah's policies were viewed as increasingly provocative by Moscow.
198. Time, "The Crescent of Crisis", 15 Jan 1979, 9
199. Chubin, S., 1979, 98-107
200. Moss, D., 1979
201. de Borchgrave, A., 1979, 15
202. Newsweek, "Can the Army hold", 12 February 1979, 10, claims that the Iranian dissidents' weapons came largely from the P.L.O. and to a lesser extent Libya.
203. Ryler, R., 1979, 8-10
204. An Iranian Foreign Ministry statement, as quoted by C. Hollingworth, "Iran and Pakistan quit CENTO," Daily Telegraph (London), 13 March 1979
205. Halliday, F., 1979, 101, claims that the American monitoring bases in Iran formed part of a \$500 million monitoring system being developed jointly by the United States and Iran, which would finally have resulted in eleven ground posts and six airborne units. The project, known as Ibex, would have involved several hundred American monitoring experts working permanently in Iran, and reflects the importance the Shah attached to Iran's strategic alliance with the United States against the Soviet Union. - 85 -

206. Events 9 Mar 1979
207. Both Brezhnev and Kosygin sent cables to the Ayatollah Khomeini on 1 February 1979, congratulating him on the foundation of an Islamic Republic in Iran. Conversely, Pravda, February 21, 1979, reported a T.A.S.S. despatch in which the Ayatollah Taleghani emphasised that Iran's relations with the Soviet Union must be good neighbourly
208. Morrow, L., 1979, 44
209. Chubin, S., 1979
210. Krutikhin, M., 1979, 10-11, talks in terms of the provocative actions of leftist groupings in Iran
211. Events 9 Mar 1979, 23
212. Chubin, S., 1979
213. Events 9 Mar 1979, 9-11
214. Allen-Mills, T., 1979
215. The Guardian, 28 Dec. 1978
216. Pranger, R.J. & Tahtinen, D.R., 1979, 7
217. ISC May 1979, 8 quoting from Pravda 19 Nov 1978
218. Hollingworth, C., op.cit.
219. Newsweek, 12 Feb 1979, 8-13
220. Seale, P., 1979
221. US Congress, 1978
222. Martin, P., "Oman: Troubled Neighbour", Newsweek, 19 February 1979 29 and The Middle East, "Oman: the next Domino?" 56, June 1979, 19-20
223. The clearest indication of the flare-up in PFLO activity came with the assassination of the Governor of Dhofar, Buraik Bin-Hammaud al Gheferi on the 1st June 1979. Arab Report, 20th June 1979
224. Daily Telegraph, 10 April, 1979
225. See Cooper, R., 1979
226. Originally the Saudis gave their tacit approval to the Camp David Process. However the mobilisation of Arab opinion against them, and the shortcomings of the Camp David agreement, swung the Saudi royal family consensus to open opposition. Finally the Iranian revolution convinced the Saudis that the United States had begun to look to Mexico as an alternative to Gulf oil, and made it clear that the Saudis would have been gambling with their own survival had they compromised. de Borchgrave, A. op.cit., 15
227. Quoted in Hirst, D., "Iraq boycott talks to follow peace", The Guardian 22 March 1979
228. ISC op.cit. 11
229. Literaturnaya Gazeta, No. 5, 31 January 1979, as quoted in Dawisha, K., "USSR and the Middle East: strategy at the crossroads", The World Today, March 1979, 91-101
230. Al Hawadess (Beirut), 3 March 1979 as quoted in Arab Report, 14 March 1979
231. Lippman, T., 1979

232. IISS Strategic Survey 1978
233. Hirst, D. 1979b
234. Ibid
235. Time, 15 Jan 1979, 9
236. As quoted by Hirst, D. 1979c
237. See note 186 and Allen-Mills, T., 1979b. This report mentions that a special representative of Sultan Qabus of Oman visited Iran in September, to discuss security in the Strait of Hormuz.
238. Cooper, R., 1979, 11
239. Arab Report, 20 June 1979
240. Bulloch, J., "Iraqi rift with Iran deepens", The Daily Telegraph, 14 June 1979
241. Hirst, D., 1979b
242. Arab Report, 20 June 1979
243. Breeze, R., 1979, 4-6
244. Tyler, R., 1979b
245. The Economist (London) 18 Sept 1979, 54-55
246. The Economist (London) 9 Dec. 1978
247. Tyler, R., 1979a, 10
248. Dawisha, K., 1979, 91-101

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